Grace Abounding

To the CHIEF of

SINNERS:

OR,

A Brief and Faithful Relation of the exceeding Mercy of GOD in CHRIST, to His Poor Servant

JOHN BUNYAN.

Wherein is particularly shewed, The manner of his Conversion, his sight and trouble for Sin, his dreadful Temptations; also how he despaired of GODS Mercy, and how the LORD at length through CHRIST, did deliver him from all the guilt and terrour that lay upon him.

All which was written by his own hand, and now published for the support of the weak and tempted People of GOD.

The Sixth Edition, Corrected and much enlarged by the Author.

Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my Soul,
PSALMS 66. 16.

Glasgow, Printed by *Robert Sanders*, One of His Majesties Printers, 1697.

A

PREFACE,

OR,

A Brief *Account* of the publiſhing of this *Work*:

Written by the Authour thereof, and dedicated to thoſe whom God hath counted him worthy to beget to Faith, by his Miniſtry in the Word.

CHildren, Grace be with you, Amen. *I being taken from you in preſence, and ſo tied up, that I cannot perform that duty that from God doth lie upon me, to you ward, for your further edifying and building up in Faith and Holineſs,* &c. *Yet that you may ſee my Soul hath fatherly care and deſire after your ſpiritual and everlaſting welfare; I now once again, as fro*

the top of Shenir *and* Hermon, *ſo from* the Lions Dens, and from the Mountains of the Leopards, (*Song* 4. 8.) *do look yet after all, greatly longing to ſee your ſafe arrival into* THE *deſired Haven.*

I thank God upon every Remembrance of you, and rejoyce even while I ſtick between the Teeth of the Lions in the Wilderneſs, at the grace, and mercy, and knowledge of Chriſt our Saviour, which God hath beſtowed upon you, with abundance of Faith and Love. Your hungerings and thirſtings alſo after further acquaintance with the Father in his Son; your tenderneſs of Heart, your trembling at ſin, your ſober and holy deportment alſo, before both God and Men, is great refreſhment to me: for you are my glory, and joy, 1 *Theſ.* 2. 20.

I have ſent you here incloſed a drop of that honey that I have taken out of the Carcaſe of a Lion, Judg. 14. 5. 6, 7, 8. *I have eaten thereof my ſelf alſo, and am much refreſhed thereby.* (*Temptations when we meet them at firſt, are as the Lion that roared upon* Sampſon: *but if we overcome them, the next time we ſee them, we ſhall find a Neſt of Honey within them.*) *The Philiſtians, underſtand me not: It is ſomething a Relation of the work of God upon my own Soul, even from the very firſt, till now: wherein you may perceive my caſtings down, and riſings up: for he woundeth, and his hands make whole. It is written in the Scripture,* Iſai. 38. 19. The father to the children ſhall make known the truth of GOD. *Yea, it was for this reaſon I lay ſo*

long

long at Sinai, Lev. 4. 10, 11.) *to see the fire and the cloud, and the darkneſs,* that I might fear the Lord all the days of my life upon earth, and tell of his wondrous works to my children, *Pſal* 78. 3, 4, 5.

Moſes Num. 33. 1, 2. *writ of the Journeyings of the Children of* Iſrael *from* Egypt *to the Land of* Canaan; *and commanded alſo, that they did remember their fourty years travel in the Wilderneſs.* Thou ſhalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee theſe fourty Years in the Wilderneſs, to humble thee, and to prove thee, and to know what was in thine Heart, whether thou wouldſt keep his Commandments or no, *Deut.* 8. 2. 3. *Wherefore this I have endeavoured to do; and not only ſo, but to publiſh it alſo; that, if God will, others may be put in remembrance of what he hath done for their Souls, by reading his work upon me.*

It is profitable for Chriſtians to be often calling to mind the very beginnings of Grace with their Souls, It is a Night to be much obſerved to the Lord, for bringing them out from the Land of Egypt. This is that night of the Lord, to be obſerved of all the Children of *Iſrael* in their Generations, *Exod.* 12. 42. My God, *ſaith* David, *Pſal.* 42. 6. My Soul is caſt down within me; but I will remember thee from the Land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, from the hill Mizar. *He remembred alſo the Lion and the Bear, when he went to fight with the Gaint of* Gath, 1 *Sam.* 17. 36. 37.

The PREFACE.

It was Pauls *accuſtomed manner,* Acts 22. *and that when tried for his life,* Acts 24. *even to open before his Judges the manner of his Converſion: He would think of that day and that hour, in which he firſt did meet with Grace: for he found it ſupported him. When God had brought the Children of* Iſrael *throw the* Red Sea, *far into the Wilderneſs; yet they muſt turn quite about thither again, to remember the drowning of their enemies there,* Num. 14. 25. *for though they ſang his Praiſe before, yet they ſoon forgat his works,* Pſal. 106. 11, 12.

In this Diſcourſe of mine, you may ſee much; much, I ſay, of the Grace of God towards me: I thank God I can count it much; for it was above my ſins, and Satans temptations too. I can remember my fears, and doubts, and ſad Moneths, with comfort; they are as the head of Goliah *in my hand: there was nothing to* David *like* Goliah's *Sword, even that Sword that ſhould have been ſheathed in his bowels; for the very ſight and remembrance of that, did preach forth Gods deliverance to him. O the remembrance of my great ſins, of my great temptations, and of my great fears of periſhing for ever! They bring freſh into my mind, the remembrance of my great help, my great ſupport from Heaven, and the great grace that GOD extended to ſuch a wretch as I.*

My dear Children, call to mind the former days, and years of ancient times; remember alſo your ſongs in the night, and commune with your own heart, Pſalm. 73. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. *Yea, look*

diligently

diligently, and leave no corner therein unsearched; for that is treasure hid, even the treasure of your first and second experience of the grace of God toward you. Remember, I say, the Word that first laid hold upon you; remember your terrours of Conscience and fear of death and hell: remember also your tears and prayers to God; yea, how you sighed under every hedge of mercy. Have you never a Hill Mizar to remember? Have you forgot the Close, the Milk-house, the Stable, the Barn, and the like, where God did visit your Soul? Remember also the Word, the Word, I say, upon which the Lord hath caused you to hope: If you have Sinned against Light, if you are tempted to blaspheme, if you are down in despair, if you think God fights against you, or if heaven is hid from your eyes; remember 'twas thus with your Father, but out of them all the Lord delivered me.

I could have enlarged much in this my discourse of my temptation and troubles for Sin, as also of the merciful kindness and working of GOD with my Soul: I could also have stept into a stile much higher than this in which I have here discoursed, and could have adorned all things more than here I have seemed to do: but I dare not: God did not play in convincing of me: the Devil did not play in tempting of me; neither did I play when I sunk as into a bottomless pit, when the pangs of hell caught hold upon me: wherefore I may not play in my relating of them, but be plain and simple, and lay down the thing as it

was

was : He that liketh it, let him receive it ; and he that does not, let him produce a better. Farewel.

My dear Children,

The Milk and Honey is beyond this Wilderneſs : GOD be mercifull to you, and grant you be not ſlothfull to go in to poſſeſs the Land.

Jo. Bunyan.

GRACE

97

Grace Abounding

To the CHIEF of

SINNERS.

OR,

A Brief Relation of the exceeding Mercy of God in Christ, to his poor Servant *John Bunyan.*

IN this my Relation of the merciful working of God upon my Soul it will not be a miss, if in the first place I do in a few words give you a hint of my Pedegree, and manner of bringing up; that thereby the goodness and bounty of God towards me, may be the more advanced and magnified before the Sons of Men.

2. For my Descent then, it was, as is well known by many, of a low and inconsiderable generation; my Fathers house being of that rank that is meanest, and most despised of all the families in the Land. Wherefore I have not here,

as

as others, to boast of Noble blood, or of a High born state according to the flesh; though all things considered, I magnifie the Heavenly Majesty, for that by this door he brought me into this World, to partake of the Grace and Life that is in Christ by the Gospel.

3. But yet notwithstanding the meanness and inconsiderableness of my Parents, it pleased God to put it into their heart, to put me to School, to learn both to Read and Write; the which I also attained, according to the rate of other poor mens children, though to my shame I confess, I did soon lose that little I learnt, even almost utterly, and that long before the Lord did work his gracious work of Conversion upon my Soul.

4. As for my own natural life, for the time that I was without God in the world, it was, indeed, *according to the course of this World, and the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience*, *Eph.* 2. 2, 3. It was my delight, to be taken captive by the Devil *at his will*, 2 Tim. 2. 25. being filled with all unrighteousness; the which did also so strongly work, and put forth it self, both in my heart and life, and that from a child, that I had but few Equals, (especially considering my years, which were tender, being few) both for cursing, swearing, lying and blaspheming the Holy Name of GOD.

5. Yea, so setled and rooted was I in these things, that they became as a second Nature to me; the which, as I also have with soberness considered since, did so offend the Lord, that even

even in my childhood he did ſcare and affright me with fearful dreams, and did terrifie me with dreadful viſions. For often, after I had ſpent this and the other day in ſin, I have in my bed been greatly afflicted, while aſleep, with the apprehenſions of Devils and wicked Spirits, who ſtill, as I then thought, laboured to draw me away with them; Of which I could never be rid. Alſo I ſhould at theſe Years be greatly afflicted and troubled with the thoughts of the fearful torments of Hell-fire; ſtill fearing that it would be my lot to be found at laſt amongſt thoſe Devils and Helliſh Fiends, who are there bound down with the chains and bonds of Eternal darkneſs.

6. Theſe things, I ſay, when I was but a child, about nine or ten years old did ſo diſtreſs my Soul, that when in the midſt of my many ſports and childiſh vanities, amidſt my vain Companions, I was often much caſt down and afflicted in my mind therewith; yet could I not let go my ſins: yea, I was ſo overcome with deſpair of life, and heaven, that then I ſhould often wiſh either that there had been no Hell, or that I had been a Devil; ſuppoſing they were onely tormentors; that if it muſt needs be, if I indeed went thither, I might be rather a tormentor, than be tormented my ſelf.

7. A while after, theſe terrible dreams did leave me, which alſo I ſoon forgot; for my pleaſures did quickly cut off the remembrance of them, as if they had never been: wherefore with more greedineſs, according to the ſtrength of Nature, I

did

did ſtill let looſe the reins to my luſt, and delighted in all tranſgreſſion againſt the Law of God: ſo that until I came to the ſtate of Marriage, I was the very ring-leader of all the Youth that kept me company, in all manner of vice and ungodlineſs.

8. Yea ſuch prevalency had the luſts and fruits of the fleſh, in this poor Soul of mine, that had not a miracle of precious Grace prevented, I had not only periſhed by the ſtroke of eternal Juſtice, but alſo laid my ſelf open even to the ſtroke of thoſe Laws, which bring ſome to diſgrace and open ſhame, before the face of the world.

9. In theſe days the thoughts of Religion were very grievous to me; I could neither endure it my ſelf, nor that any other ſhould: ſo that when I have ſeen ſome read in thoſe Books that concerned Chriſtian Piety, it would be as it were a Priſon to me. *Then I ſaid unto God, Depart from me, for I deſire not the knowledge of thy ways*, Job. 21. 14, 15. I was now void of all good conſideration; Heaven and Hell were both out of ſight and mind; and as for Saving and Damning, they were leaſt in my thoughts. *O Lord, thou knoweſt my life, and my ways were not hid from thee.*

10. But this I well remember, That though I could my ſelf ſin with the greateſt delight and eaſe, and alſo taken pleaſure in the vileneſs of my companions; yet even then, if I have at any time ſeen wicked things by thoſe who profeſſed goodneſs, it would make my ſpirit tremble. As once above all the reſt, when I was in my height of vanity,

vanity, yet hearing one to swear, that was reckoned for a Religious man, it had so great a stroke upon my spirit, that it made my heart ake.

11. But God did not utterly leave me, but followed me still, not now with convictions, but Judgements, yet such as were mixt with mercy. For once I fell into a crick of the Sea, and hardly escaped drowning: another time I fell out of a Boat into *Bedford* River, but mercy yet preserved me alive: Besides, another time being in the field, with one of my Companions, it chanced that an Adder passed over the High way, so I having a stick in mine hand, struck her over the back, and having stounded her, I forced open her mouth with my stick, and plucked her sting out with may fingers, by which act had not God been mercifull to me, I might by my departures have brought my self to mine end.

This also I have taken notice of with thanksgiving: When I was a Souldier, I with others were drawn out to go to such a place to besiege it, but when I was just ready to go, one of the company desired to go in my room, to which when I had consented he took my place, and coming to the siege, as he stood Sentinel, he was shot into the head with a Musket bullet and died.

Here, as I said, were Judgements, and Mercy, but neither of them did awaken my soul to Righteousness, wherefore I sinned still, and grew more and more rebellious against God, and careless of mine own Salvation.

12. Presently after this, I changed my conditi-

on into a Married ſtate; and my mercy was, to light upon a *Wife* whoſe *Father* was counted godly: This *Woman* and I, though we came together as poor as poor might be, (not having ſo much houſhold ſtuff as a Diſh, or Spoon betwixt us both) yet this ſhe had for her part, *The Plain Mans Path-way to Heaven*, and *The Practice of Piety*, which her *Father* had left her, when he died. In theſe two Books, I ſhould ſometimes read with her, wherein I alſo found ſome things that were ſomewhat pleaſing to me: (but all this while I met with no conviction.) She alſo would be often telling of me what a godly man her *Father* was, and how he would reproye and correct vice, both in his houſe and amongſt his neighbours; what a ſtrict and holy life he lived in his day, both in word and deed.

13. *Wherefore* theſe Books, with this Relation, though they did not reach my heart to awaken it about my ſad and ſinful ſtate, yet they did beget within me ſome deſires to Religion: ſo that, becauſe I knew no better, I fell in verie eagerlie with the Religion of the Times, to wit, to go to Church twice a day, and that too with the foremoſt, and there ſhould verie devoutlie both ſay and ſing as others did; yet retaining my wicked life: but withal, I was ſo over-run with the ſpirit of ſuperſtition, that I adored, and that with great devotion, even all things (both the High-Place, Prieſt, Clerk, Veſtments, Service, and what elſe) belonging to the Church; counting all things holie that were therein contained; and eſpeciallie the Prieſt and Clerk moſt happie, and without doubt

doubt greatly blessed, because they were the Servants, as I then thought, of God: and were principal in the holie Temple, to do his work therein.

14. This conceit grew so strong in little time upon my spirit, that had I but seen a Priest (though never so sordid and debauched in his life) I should find my spirit fall under him, reverence him, and knit unto him; yea, I thought for the love I did bear unto them, (supposing they were the Ministers of God) I could have lain down at their feet, and have been trampled upon by them; their Name, their Garb, and Work, did so intoxicate and bewitch me.

15. After I had been thus for some considerable time, another thought came in my mind, and that was, whether we were of the *Israelits* or no? for finding in the Scriptures, that they were once the peculiar people of God, thought, if I were once of this race, my Soul must needs be happie. Now again I found within me a great longing to be resolved about this question, but could not tell how I should: at last, I asked my Father of it, who told me, *No, we were not*: wherefore then I fell in my spirit, as to the hopes of that, and so remained.

16. But all this while I was not sensible of the danger and evil of sin: I was kept from considering that sin would damn me, what Religion soever I followed, unless I was found in Christ: nay, I never thought of him, nor whether there was one or no. *Thus man, while blind, doth wander but wearieth himself with vanity: for he knoweth not the way to the City of God*, Eccl. 10. 15.

17. But one day (amongſt all the Sermons our Parſon made) his ſubject was to treat of the Sabbath day, and of the evil of breaking that, either with labour, ſports, or otherwiſe: (now *I* was notwithſtanding my Religion one that took much delight in all manner of vice, and eſpecially that was the day that *I* did ſolace my ſelf therewith.) Wherefore *I* fell in my conſcience under his Sermon, thinking and believing that he made that Sermon on purpoſe to ſhew me my evil-doing; and at that time *I* felt what guilt was, though never before, that *I* can remember; but then *I* was for the preſent greatly loaden therewith, and ſo went home when the Sermon was ended, with a great burden on my ſpirit.

18. This for that inſtant did benum the ſinews of my beſt delights, and did imbitter my former pleaſures to me; but behold, it laſted not; for before I had well dined, the trouble began to go off my mind, and my heart returned to its old courſe: but Oh! how glad was *I*, that this trouble was gone from me, and that the fire was put out, that *I* might ſin again without controul! Wherefore when I had ſatisfied nature with my food, *I* ſhook the Sermon out of my mind, and to my old cuſtom of ſports and gaming, *I* returned with great delight.

19. But the ſame day as *I* was in the midſt of a game at Cat, and having ſtruck it one blow from the hole; juſt as *I* was about to ſtrike it the ſecond time, a voice did ſuddenly dart from Heaven into my ſoul, which ſaid, *Wilt thou leave thy ſins, and*

go

go to Heaven? or have thy sins and go to Hell? At this *I* was put to an exceeding maze; wherefore leaving my Cat upon the ground, *I* looked up to Heaven, and was as if *I* had with the eyes of my understanding, seen the Lord Jesus looking down upon me, as being very hotly displeased with me, and as if he did severely threaten me with some grievous punishment for these, and other my ungodly practices.

20. *I* had no sooner conceived in my mind, but suddenly this Conclusion was fastned on my spirit, (for the former hint did set my sins again before my face.) *That I had been a great and grievous Sinner, and that it was now too late for me to look after Heaven, For Christ would not forgive me, nor pardon my transgressions.* Then I fell to musing upon this also; and while *I* was thinking on it, and fearing lest it should be so, *I* felt my heart sink in despair, concluding it was too late; and therefore *I* resolved in my mind, *I* would go on in sin; for, thought *I*, if the case be thus, my state is surely miserable; miserable, if *I* leave my sins: and but miserable, if I follow them. I can but be damned; and if it must be so, I had as good be damned for many sins, as be damned for few.

21. Thus I stood in the midst of my play, before all that then were present; but yet I told them nothing: but, I say, I having made this conclusion, I returned desperatly to my sport again; and I well remember, that presently this kind of dispair did so possess my Soul, that I was perswaded I could never attain to other comfort

than what I ſhould get in ſin; for Heaven was gone already, ſo that on that I muſt not think: wherefore I found within me a great deſire to take my fill of ſin, ſtill ſtudying what ſin was yet to be committed, that I might taſte the ſweetneſs of it: and I made as much haſte as I could to fill my belly with its delicats, leſt I ſhould die before I had my deſire; for that I feared greatly. In theſe things *I proteſt before God, I lye not*, neither do I feign this form of ſpeech: theſe were really, ſtrongly, and with all my heart, my deſires; *the good Lord, whoſe mercy is unſearchable, forgive me my tranſgreſſions.*

22. (And I am very confident that this temptation of the Devil, is more uſual amongſt poor creatures than many are aware of, even to overrun the ſpirits with a ſcurffy and ſeared frame of heart, and benumming of conſcience: which frame, he ſtilly and ſlily ſupplieth with ſuch deſpair, that though not much guilt attendeth the Soul, yet they continually have a ſecret concluſion within them, that there is no hopes for them; *for they have loved ſins*, Jer. 2. 25. & 18. 12.)

23. Now therefore *I* went on in ſin with great greedineſs of mind, ſtill grudging that I could not be ſo ſatisfied with it as I would: this did continue with me about a moneth or more. But one day as I was ſtanding at a Neighbours ſhop-window, and there curſing and ſwearing, and playing the Madman after my wonted manner, there ſat within the Woman of the houſe, and heard me, who though ſhe was a very looſe and ungodly Wretch, yet

proteſted

protested that I swore and cursed at that most fearful rate, that she was made to tremble to hear me: And told me further, *That I was the ungodliest Fellow for swearing, that ever she heard in all her life: and that I by thus doing, was able to spoil all the youth in the whole Town, if they came but in my company.*

24. At this reproof I was silenced, and put to secret shame; and that too, as I thought, before the God of Heaven: Wherefore while I stood there, and hanging down my head, I wished with all my heart that I might be a little Child again, that my Father might learn me to speak without this wicked way of swearing: for thought I, I am so accustomed to it, that it is but in vain for me to think of a reformation, for I thought it could never be.

25. But how it came to pass I know not, I did from this time forward so leave my swearing, that it was a great wonder to my self to observe it; and whereas before I knew not how to speak unless I put an Oath before, and another behind, to make my words have authority, now I could speak better, and with more pleasantness than ever I could before: all this while I knew not Jesus Christ, neither did I leave my sports and play.

26. But quickly after this, I fell in companie with one poor man that made profession of religion, who, as I then thought, did talk pleasantly of the Scriptures, and of the matters of Religion: wherefore falling into some love and liking to what he said, I betoke me to my Bible, and began to take great pleasure in reading, but especially with the

Historical

Hiſtorical part thereof: for as for *Pauls* Epiſtles, and Scriptures of that nature, I could not away with them, being as yet but ignorant either of the corruptions of my nature, or the want and worth of Jeſus Chriſt to ſave me.

27. Wherefore *I* fell to ſome outward Reformation, both in my words and life and did ſet the Commandments before me for my way to Heaven; which Commandments I alſo did ſtrive to keep; and as I thought did keep them pretty well ſometimes, and then I ſhould have comfort; yet now and then ſhould break one, and ſo afflict my conſcience; but then I ſhould repent, and ſay I was ſorry for it, and promiſe God to do better next time, and there get help again.

28. Thus I continued about a year, all which time our Neighbours did take me to be a very godly man, a new and religious man, and did marvel much to ſee ſuch a great and famous alteration in my life and manners; and indeed ſo it was, though yet *I* knew not Chriſt, nor Grace, nor Faith, nor Hope; and truly as I have well ſeen ſince, had I then died, my ſtate had been moſt fearful: well, this I ſay, continued about a twelve month, or more.

29. Now you muſt know, that before this I had taken much delight in ringing, but my Couſcience beginning to be tender: I thought that ſuch a practice was but vain, and therefore forced my ſelf to leave it, yet my mind hanckered, wherefore I ſhould go to the ſteeple houſe and look on: But I thought this did not become Religion neither, yet

yet I forced my self and would look on still; but quickly after, I began to think how if one of the Bells should fall; then I choose to stand under a main Beam that lay over thwart the Steeple from side to side, thinking there I might stand sure: But then I should think again, should the Bell fall with a swing, it might first hit the Wall, and then redounding upon me, might kill me for all this Beam; this made me stand in the steeple door, and now thought *I*, I am safe enough, for if a Bell should then fall, I can slip out behind these thick Walls, and so be preserved notwithstanding: So after this, *I* would yet go to see them ring, but would not go no further than the Steeple door, but then it came into my head, how if the Steeple it self should fall, and this thought, (it may fall for ought I know) would, when I stood and looked on, continually so shake my mind, that I durst not stand at the Steeple door any longer, but was forced to fly for fear it should fall upon mine head.

Another thing was my dancing, I was a full year before I could quite leave it: But all this while when I thought *I* kept this or that Commandment, or did by word or deed any thing that I thought were good, I had great peace in my Conscience, and should think with my self, God cannot chuse but be now pleased with me, yea to relate it in my own Way, I thought no man in *England* could please God better then I.

But poor Wretch as I was, I was all this while ignorant of Jesus Christ, and going about to esta-

blish

blish mine own righteousness, had perished therein, had not God in mercy shewed me more of my state by nature.

29. But upon a day, the good Providence of God did cast Me to *Bedford*, to work on my Calling; and in one of the streets of that Town, I came where there were three or four poor women sitting at a door in the Sun, talking about the things of God; and being now willing to hear their discourse, I drew near to hear what they said, for I was now a brisk Talker also my self in the Matters of Religion: but I may say, I *heard, but* I *understood not*, for they were far above out of my reach, their talk was about a new birth, the work of God on their hearts, also how they were convinced of their Miserable estate by nature: they talked how God had visited their Souls with his love in the Lord Jesus, and with what words and promises they had been refreshed, comforted, and supported against the temptations of the Devil; Moreover, they reasoned of the suggestions and temptations of Satan in particular, and told to each other, by which they had been afflicted, and how they were born up under his assaults: they also discoursed of their own wretchedness of heart, of their unbelief, and did contemn, slight and abhor their own righteousness, as filthy and insufficient to do them any good.

30. And me thought they spake as if Joy did make them speak: they spake with such pleasantness of Scripture-language, and with such appearance of Grace in all they said, that they were to

me

me as if they had found a new World, as if they were *People that dwelt alone, and were not to be reckoned amongst their Neighbours, Num.* 23.9.

30. At this I felt my own heart began to shake, and mistrust my condition to be naught: for I saw that in all my thoughts about Religion and Salvation, the New birth did never enter into my Mind, neither knew I the comfort of the Word and Promise, nor the deceitfulness and treachery of my own wicked heart. As for secret thoughts, I took no notice of them, neither did I understand what Satans temptations were, nor how they were to be withstood and resisted. *&c.*

31. Thus therefore when I had heard and considered what they said, I left them and went about my employment again: but their talk and discourse went with me, also my heart would tarry with them, for *I* was greatly affected with their words, both because by them I was convinced that I wanted the true tokens of a truly godly man, and also because by them I was convinced of the happy and blessed condition of him that was such an one.

32. Therefore I should often make it my business to be going again and again into the company of these poor people; for I could not stay away; and the more I went amongst them, the more I did question my condition; and as I still do remember, presently I found two things within me, at which *I* did sometimes marvel, (especially considering what a blind, ignorant, sordid, and ungodly Wretch but just before I was) the

one

one was a very great ſoftneſs and tenderneſs of heart, which cauſed me to fall under the conviction of what by Scripture they aſſerted; and the other was, a great bending in my mind to a continual meditating on them, and on all other good things which at any time *I* heard or read of.

33. By theſe things, my mind was now ſo turned, that it lay like a Horſe-leach at the Vein, ſtill crying out, *Give, give*, Prov. 30. 15. Yea, it was ſo fixed on Eternity, and on the things about the Kingdom of Heaven, (that is ſo far as *I* knew, though as yet, God knows I knew but little) that neither pleaſures, nor profits, nor perſwaſions, nor threats, could looſe it, or make it let go its hold; and, though I may ſpeak it with ſhame, yet it is in very deed a certain truth, it would then have been as difficult for me to have taken my mind from Heaven to Earth, as I have found it often ſince to get it again from Earth to heaven.

34. One thing I may not omit, there was a young Man in our Town, to whom my heart before was knit more than to any other, but he being a moſt wicked creature for curſing and ſwearing, and whoring, I ſhook him off and forſook his company; but about a quarter of a year after I had left him, I met him in a certain Lane, and asked him how he did, he after his old ſwearing and mad Way, anſwered, he was well. But *Harry*, ſaid I, why do you ſwear and curſe thus? What will become of you if you die in this Condition? He anſwered me in a great chaſe, *What would the Devil do for company if it were not for ſuch as* I *am*.

35. About

35. About this time, *I* met with some *Ranter* Books that were put forth by some of our Country men, which Books were also highly in esteem by several old Professors: some of these *I* read, but was not able to make a Judgement about them: wherefore as *I* read in them, and thought upon them, (feeling my self unable to judge) *I* should betake my self to hearty prayer in this manner; *O Lord, I am a fool, and not able to know the Truth from Errour; Lord leave me not to my own blindness, either to approve off, or condemn this Doctrine; if it be of God, let me not despise it, if it be of the Devil, let me not embrace it. Lord, I lay my Soul in this matter, only at thy foot, let me not be deceived, I humbly beseech thee.* I had one religious intimate Companion all this while, and that was the poor Man that *I* spoke of before, but about this time he also turned a most devilish *Ranter*, and gave himself up to all manner of filthiness, especially uncleanness; he would also deny that there was a God, Angel, or Spirit, and would laugh at all exhortations to sobriety; when *I* laboured to rebuke his wickedness, he would laugh the more, and pretend that he had gone through all Religions, and could never light on the right till now, he told me also that in little time *I* should see all Professors turn to the ways of the Ranters; Wherefore abominating those cursed principles, *I* left his company forthwith, and became to him as great a stranger as I had been before a familiar. Neither was this Man onely a temptation to me, but

y calling lying in the countrey, *I* happened to ght into several peoples company: who though strict in Religion formerly, yet was also swept away by these Ranters. These would also talk with me of their ways, and condemn me as legal and dark, pretending that they only had attained to perfection, that could do what they would and not sin. O these temptations were suitable to my flesh, *I* being bu: a young Man, and my nature in its prime, but God who had as *I* hope designed Me for better things, kept Me in the fear of his Name, and did not suffer Me to accept of such cursed Principles. And blessed be God who put it in my heart to cry to him to be kept and directed, still distrusting mine own Wisdom, for I have since seen even the effect of that prayer in his preserving me, not only from Ranting Errors, but from those also that have sprung up since. The Bible was precious to me in those days.

36. And now, me thought, I began to look into the Bible with new eyes, and read as I never did before; and especially the Epistles of the Apostle S. *Paul* were sweet and pleasant to Me; and indeed, I was then never out of the Bible, either by reading or meditation, still crying out to God, that I might know the truth, and way to Heaven and Glory.

37. And as I went on and read, I lighted on that passage, *To one is given by the Spirit the Word of Wisdom, to another the Word of Knowledge by the same Spirit, and to another Faith*, &c. 1 *Cor.* 12. And though, as I have since seen, that by this Scripture

Scripture the Holy Ghost intends, in special, things extraordinary, yet on me it then did fasten with conviction, that I did want things ordinary, even that understanding and wisdom that other Christians had. On this Word I mused, and could not tell what to do, especially this word [*Faith*] put me to it, for I could not help it, but sometimes must question whether *I* had any *Faith* or no, but I was loth to conclude I had no Faith: for if I do so, thought I, then I shall count my self a very Cast-away indeed.

38. No, said I with my self, though I am convinced that I am an ignorant Sot, and that I want those blessed Gifts of Knowledge and Understanding that other good people have, yet at a venture I will conclude, I am not altogether faithless, though I know not what faith is. For it was shewed me, and that too (as I have since seen) by Satan, that those who conclude themselves in a faithless state, have neither rest nor quiet in their souls; and I was loth to fall quite into despair.

39. Wherefore by this suggestion, I was for a while made afraid to see my want of *Faith*; but God would not suffer me thus to undo and destroy my Soul, but did continually against this my blind and sad conclusion, create still within me such suppositions, insomuch that I could not rest content, until I did now come to some certain knowledge whether I had Faith or no; this always runing in my mind; *But how if you want Faith indeed? But how can you tell you have Faith?* And besides; I saw for certain if I had it not, I was sure to perish for ever.

40. So that though I endeavoured at the first to look over the business of *Faith*, yet in a little time, *I* better considering the matter, was willing to put my self upon the tryal, whether I had *Faith* or no. But alas, poor wretch! so ignorant and brutish was *I*, that *I* knew to this day no more how to do it, than I know how to begin and accomplish that rare and curious piece of Art, which I never yet saw or considered.

41. Wherefore while I was thus considering, and being put to my plunge about it (for you must know that as yet I had in this matter broken my mind to no man, only did hear and consider) the Temper came in with this delusion, That there was no way for me to know *I* had *Faith*, but by trying to work some miracle, urging those *Scriptures* that seem to look that way, for the inforcing and strengthening his Temptation. Nay, one day as I was betwixt *Elstow* and *Bed-ford*, the temptation was hot upon Me to try if I had *Faith* by doing some Miracle; which Miracle at that time was this, *I* must say to the Puddles that were in the Horse-pads, *Be dry*; and to the dry places, *Be you the Puddles*; and truly one time I was a going to say so indeed, but just as *I* was about to speak, this thought came into my mind, *But go under yonder Hedge, and pray first, that GOD would make you able*: But when I had concluded to pray, this came hot upon Me, That if I prayed, and came again and tried to do it, and yet did nothing notwithstanding, then be sure I had no *Faith*, but was a Cast-away, and lost: Nay, thought *I*, if it be

be ſo, I will never try yet, but will ſtay a little longer.

42. So I continued at a great loſs: for I thought if they only had *Faith* which could do ſuch wonderful things. then I concluded that for the preſent *I* neither had it, nor yet for time to come were ever like to have it. Thus I was toſſed betwixt the Devil and my own ignorance, and ſo perplexed, eſpecially at ſome times, that *I* could not tell what to do.

43. About this time, the ſtate and happineſs of theſe poor people at *Bedford*, was thus in a kind of a Viſion preſented to me: I ſaw as if they were ſet on the Sunny ſide of ſome high Mountain, there refreſhing themſelves with the pleaſant beams of the Sun, while I was ſhivering and ſhrinking in the cold; afflicted with *Froſt*, Snow, and dark Clouds; me thought alſo betwixt me and them, I ſaw a Wall that did compaſs about this Mountain; now through this Wall, my Soul did greatly deſire to paſs, concluding that if I could, I would go even into the very midſt of them, and there alſo comfort my ſelf with the heat of their Sun.

44. About this Wall I thought my ſelf to go again and again, ſtill praying as *I* went, to ſee if *I* could find ſome way or paſſage by which I might enter therein, but none could I find for ſome time: at the laſt *I* ſaw, as it were, a narrow gap, like a little door way in the Wall, thorow which I attempted to paſs: now the paſſage being very ſtrait, and narrow, I made many offers to get in, but all in vain, even untill I was well nigh

quite beat out by striving to get in: at last with great striving, me thought I at first did get in my head, and after that by a sideling striving, my shoulders, and my whole body; then was I exceeding glad, and went and sat down in the midst of them, and so was comforted with the light and heat of their Sun.

45. Now this Mountain and Wall, *&c.* was thus made out to me; The Mountain signified the Church of the Living God; the Sun that shone thereon, the comfortable shining of his mercifull Face on them ỳ were therein: the Wall I thought was the Word that did make separation between the Christians and the World: and the Gap which was in this Wall, I thought was Jesus Christ, who is the Way to God the Father, *John* 14. 6. *Mat.* 7. 14. But for as much as the Passage was wonderful narrow, even so narrow, that I could not but with great difficulty, enter in thereat; it shewed Me, that none could enter into life but those that were in down-right earnest, and unless also they left this wicked World behind them; for here was only room for Body and Soul, but not for Body and Soul, and Sin.

46. This resemblance abode upon my Spirit many days, all which time I saw my self in a forlorn & sad condition, but yet was provocked to a vehement hunger, and desire to be one of that number that did sit in the Sun shine: now also I should pray where ever I was, whether at home or abroad, in house or field, and should also often with lifting up of heart, sing that of the fifty first Psalm,

Psalm, *O Lord, consider my distress* : for as yet *I* knew not where *I* was.

47. Neither as yet could *I* attain to any comfortable perswasion that *I* had *Faith* in Christ; but instead of having satisfaction, here *I* began to find my Soul to be assaulted with fresh doubts about my future happiness, especially with such as these, *Whether* I *was elected*; *but how if the Day of Grace should now be past and gone ?*

48. By these two temptations *I* was very much afflicted and disquieted ; sometimes by one, and sometimes by the other of them. And first, to speak of that about my questioning my election ; *I* found, at this time, that though *I* was in a flame to find the way to Heaven and Glory, and though nothing could beat me off from this, yet this question did so offend and discourage me, that *I* was, especially at some times, as if the very strength of my body also had been taken away by the force and power thereof. This Scripture also did seem to Me to trample upon all my desires, *It is neither in him that willeth, nor in him that runneth, but in God that sheweth mercy*, Rom. 9.

43. With this Scripture *I* could not tell what to do, for *I* evidently saw, unless that the Great God of his infinite Grace and Bounty, had voluntarily chosen Me to be a Vessel of Mercy, though *I* should desire, and long, and labour untill my heart did break, no good could come of it. Therefore this would still stick with Me, How can you tell you are elected ? And what if you should not, how then ?

50. O

50. O Lord, thought *I*, what if *I* ſhould not indeed? it may be you are not, ſaid the Temper: it may be ſo indeed, thought *I*. Why then ſaid Satan, you had as good leave off, and ſtrive no further; for if indeed you ſhould not be elected and choſen of God, there is no talk of your being ſaved: *For it is neither in him that willeth, nor in him that runneth, but in God that ſheweth mercy.*

51. By theſe things *I* was driven to my wits end, not knowing what to ſay, or how to anſwer theſe temptations, (indeed *I* little thought that Satan had thus aſſaulted me, but that rather it was my own prudence thus to ſtart the queſtion) for that the Elect onely attained eternal life, that I without ſcruple did heartily cloſe withal: but that my ſelf was one of them, there lay the queſtion.

52. Thus therefore for ſeveral days I was greatly aſſaulted and perplexed, and was often, when I have been walking, ready to ſink where I went, with faintneſs in my mind: but one day, after *I* had been ſo many weeks oppreſſed and caſt down therewith, as I was now quite giving up the Ghoſt of all my hopes of ever attaining life, that ſentence fell with weight upon my Spirit, *Look at the Generations of old, and ſee, did ever any truſt in God, and were confounded?*

53. At which I was greatly lightned, and encouraged in my Soul, for thus at that very inſtant it was expounded to me: *Begin at the beginning of* Geneſis, *and read to the end of the* Revelation, *and ſee if you can find that there was any that ever truſted in the Lord, and was confounded.* So coming home,

home, *I* presently went to my Bible to see if *I* could find that saying, not doubting but to find it presently, for it was so fresh, and with such strength and comfort on my Spirit, that I was as if it talked with me.

54. Well, I looked, but *I* found it not, onely it abode upon me: then I did ask first this good Man, and then another if they knew where it was; but they knew no such place: at this I wondered that such a sentence should so suddenly and with such comfort and strength seize and abide upon my heart, and yet that none could find it, (for I doubted not but it was in Holy Scripture.)

55. Thus *I* continued above a year, and could not find the place, but at last casting mine eye into the *Apocrypha* Books, I found it in *Ecclesiasticus*, *Eccles.* 2. 10. This at the first did somewhat daunt Me, but because by this time *I* had got more experience of the love and kindness of God, it troubled me the less: especially when I considered, that though it was not in those Texts that we call Holy and Canonical, yet for as much as this sentence was the sum and substance of many of the Promises, it was my duty to take the comfort of it, and I bless God for that Word, for it was of God to me: that Word doth still at times shine before my face.

56. After this, that other doubt did come with strength upon me, *But how if the day of Grace should be past and gone?* how if you have overstood the time of Mercy? Now I remember that one day as I was walking into the Countrey, I was much in y

thoughts

thoughts of this, *but how if the day of Grace be past?* And to aggravate my trouble, the Tempter presented to my Mind those good People of *Bedford*, and suggested thus unto me, that these being converted already they were all that God would save in those parts, and that I came too late, for these had got the Blessing before I came.

57. Now was I in great distress, thinking in very deed that this might be well so: wherefore *I* went up and down bemoaning my sad condition, counting my self far worse than a thousand fools, for standing off thus long, and spending so many years in sin as *I* have done: still crying out! Oh that I had turned sooner! Oh that I had turned seven years ago: It made Me also angry with my self, to think that I should have no more wit but to trifle away my time till my Soul and Heaven were lost.

58. But when *I* had been long vexed with this fear, and was scarce able to take one step more, just about the same place where *I* received my other encouragement, these words broke in upon my mind, *Compel them to come in, that my House may be filled, and yet there is room*, Luke 14. 22, 23. These words, but especially them, *And yet there is room*, were sweet words to Me; for truly I thought that by them I saw ỹ there was place enough in Heaven for Me; and moreover, ỹ when ỹ Lord Jesus did speak these words, he then did think of Me, & that he knowing the time would come that I should be afflicted w̃ fear, that there was no place left for Me in his Bosom, did before speak this

Word,

Word, and leave it upon Record, that I might find help thereby against this vile temptation, this *I* then verily believed.

59. In the light and encouragement of this Word, I went a pretty while, and the comfort was the more, when I thought that the Lord Jesus should think on Me so long ago, and that he should speak them words on purpose for my sake, for *I* did then think verily that he did on purpose speak them to encourage me withal.

But I was not without my temptations to go back again; temptations, I say, both from Satan, mine own heart, and carnal acquaintance; but I thank God, these were outweighed by that sound sense of death, and of the day of Judgement which abode, as it were continually in my view. *I* should often also think on *Nebuchadnezzar*, of whom it is said, *He had given him all the Kingdoms of the Earth*, Dan. 5. 18, 19. Yet thought I, if this great Man had all his portion in this World, one hour in Hell Fire would make him forget all. Which consideration was a great help to me.

60. I was also made about this time to see something concerning the Beasts that *Moses* counted clean and unclean. I thought those Beasts were types of men; the clean types of them that were the People of God: but the unclean types of such as were the children of the wicked one. Now I read, that the clean Beasts chewed the Cud; that is, thought I they shew us we must feed upon the word of God: they also parted the Hoof, I thought that signified, we must part, if we would be saved, with

with the ways of ungodly Men. And also, in further reading about them, I found, that though we did chew the cud as the Hare; yet if we walked with claws like a Dog, or if we did not part the Hoof like the Swine; yet if we did not chew the Cud as the Sheep, we were still for all that but unclean: for *I* thought the Hare to be a type of those that talk of the Word, yet walk in ways of sin; and the Swine like him that parteth with his outward Pollutions, but still wanteth the Word of Faith, without which there could be no way of Salvation, let a Man be never so devout, *Deut.* 14.

61. After this, I found by reading of the Word, that those that must be glorified with Christ in another World, *Must be called by him here*, Called to the partaking of a share in his Word, and Righteousness, and to the comforts and first fruits of his Spirit, and to a peculiar interest in all those Heavenly things, which do indeed forefit the Soul for that rest and House of Glory, which is in Heaven above.

62. Here again I was at a very great stand, not knowing what to do, fearing *I* was not called, for thought I, if *I* be not called, what then can do me good? None but those who are effectually called, inherit the Kingdom of Heaven. But oh how I now loved those Words that spake of a *Christians Calling*! as when the Lord said to one, *Follow me*, and to another, *Come after me*; and oh, thought *I*, that he would say to me too! how gladly would *I* run after him.

63. I

63. *I* cannot now express with what longings and breathings in my Soul, *I* cryed to Christ to to call me. Thus I continued for a time all on a flame to be converted to Jesus Christ, and did also see at that day such glory in a converted state, that I could not be contented without a share therein. Gold I could it have been gotten for gold, what could I have given for it! had I had a whole World, it had all gone ten thousand times over, for this, that my Soul might have been in a converted state.

64. How lovely now was every one in mine eyes, that I thought to be converted Men and Women? they shone, they walked like a people that carried the broad seal of Heaven about them. Oh, I saw the lot was fallen to them in pleasant places, and they had a goodly Heritage, *Psal.* 16. But that which made me sick, was that of Christ, in Mark, *He went up into a Mountain, and called to him whom he would, and they came unto him*, Mark 3. 13.

65. This Scripture made me faint and fear, yet yet it kindled fire in my Soul. That which made Me fear, was this, lest Christ should have no liking to Me, for he called *whom he would*. But oh the glory that I saw in that condition, did still so engage my heart, that *I* could seldom read of any that Christ did call, but I presently wished, would I had been in their cloaths, would I had been born *Peter*, would I had been born *John*, or would I had been by, and had heard him when he called them, how would I have cryed, *O Lord, call me*

 also!

also! but Oh, I feared he would not call Me.

65. And truly the Lord let Me go thus many moneths together, and shewed Me nothing, either that I was alreadie, or should be called hereafter. But at last, after much time spent, and many groans to God, that *I* might be made partaker of the holy and heavenly calling, that word came in upon Me, *I will cleanse their blood that I have not cleansed, for the Lord dwelleth in Zion*, Joel 3. 21: These words *I* thought were sent to encourage Me to wait still upon God, and signified unto Me that if I were not already, yet time might come I might be in truth converted unto Christ.

67. About this time I began to break my mind to those poor people in *Bedford*, and to tell them my condition; which when they had heard they told M. *Gifford* of Me, who himself also took occasion to talk with Me, and was willing to be perswaded of Me, though I think but from little grounds: but he invited Me to his house, where I should hear him confer with others about the dealings of God with the Soul; from all which *I* still received more conviction, and from that time began to see something of the vanity and inward wretchedness of my wicked heart, for as yet I knew no great matter therein, but now it began to be discovered unto Me, and also to work at that rate as it never did before. Now I evidently found, that lusts and corruptions put forth themselves within Me, in wicked thoughts and desires, which I did not regard before: My desires also for Heaven and life began to fail: I found also,

that

that whereas before my Soul was full of longings after God, now it began to hanker after every foolish vanity; yea my heart would not be moved to mind that that was good, it began to be careless both of my Soul and Heaven; it would now continually hang back both to, and in every duty, and was as a clog on the leg of a Bird to hinder Me from flying.

68. Nay, thought I, now I grow worse and worse, now am *I* farther from conversion than ever I was before; wherefore I began to sink greatly in my Soul, and began to entertain such discouragement in my heart, as laid me as low as Hell, if now *I* should have burned at a Stake, I could not believe that Christ had love for Me. Alas, I could neither hear him, nor see him, nor feel him, nor savour any of his things: *I* was driven as with a Tempest, my heart would be unclean, the *Canaanites* would dwell in the Land.

69. Sometimes I would tell my Condition to the People of God; which when they heard they would pity Me, and would tell Me of the Promises, but they had as good have told Me, that *I* must reach the sun with my finger, as have bidden Me receive or relie upon the Promise, and as soon I should have done it, all my sence and feeling was against me; and I saw *I* had a heart that would sin, and lay under a Law that would condemn.

70. These things have often made me think of the Child which the Father brought to Christ, *who while he was yet a coming to him, was thrown down by the Devil, and also so rent and torn by him, that*

he lay and wallowed foaming. Luke 9. 42. Mark. 9. 20

71. Further, in these dayes, I should find my heart to shut it self up against the Lord, and against his holy Word; I have found my unbelief to set as it were the shoulder to the door to keep him out, and that too, even then when I have with many a bitter sigh cried, Good Lord break it open: *Lord break these Gates of Brass, and cut the Bars of Iron asunder*, Psal. 107. 16. Yet that Word would sometime create in my heart a peaceable pause, *I girded thee, though thou hast not known me*, Isa. 45. 5.

72. But all this while, as to the act of sinning; *I* never was more tender then now, *I* durst not take a pin, or stick, though but so big as a straw, for my Conscience now was sore, and would smart at every touch: I could not now tell how to speak my words for fear *I* should mis-place them: O how gingerly did I then go, in all *I* did or said: *I* found my self as on a miry Bog, that shook, if *I* did but stir, and was as there left, both of GOD, and Christ, and the Spirit, and all good things.

73. But *I* observe, though I was such a great sinner before conversion. Yet God never much charged the guilt of the sins of my Ignorance upon Me, only he shewed Me I was lost if *I* had not Christ because *I* had been a sinner. I saw that I wanted a perfect righteousness to present Me without fault before God, & that this righteousness was no where to be found but in the person of Jesus Christ.

74. But my Original and inward pollution, that, that it was my plague and my affliction; that *I* saw

at

at a dreadful rate all ways putting forth it self within Me, that I had the guilt of to amazement; by reason of that, it was more loathsome in mine own eyes then was a toad, and I thought I was so in Gods eyes too, sin and corruption, I said would as naturally bubble out of my heart, as water would bubble out of a fountain. I thought now that every one had a better heart then I had; I could have changed heart with any body, I thought, none but the Devil himself could equalize me for inward wickedness and pollution of mind. I fell therefore at the sight of mine own vileness, deeply into despair, for I concluded that this condition that I was in, Could not stand with a state of grace, sure thought I, I am forsaken of God, sure I am given up to the devil, and to a reprobate mind, and thus I continued along while, even for some years together.

75. While I was thus afflicted with the fears of my own damnation, there were two things would make Me wonder; the one was, when I saw old people hunting after the things of this life, as if they should live here alwayes; The other was, when I found Professors much distressed and cast down when they met with outward losses, as of Husband, Wife, Child, &c. Lord, thought I, what a doe is here about such little things as these? what seeking after carnal things by some, and what grief in others for the loss of them! if they so much labour after, and spend so many tears for the things of this present life; how am I to be bemoaned, pitied and prayed for! my Soul,

dying, my Soul is damning. Were my Soul but in a good condition, and were I but sure of it, ah, how rich should I esteem my self, though blest but with Bread and Water: I should count those but small afflictions, and should bear them as little burdens. *A wounded Spirit who can bear?*

76. And though I was thus troubled and tossed, afflicted with the sight and sense and terror of my own wickedness, yet I was afraid to let this sense and sight go quite off my mind: for I found that unless guilt of Conscience was taken off the right way, that is, by the blood of Christ, a Man grew rather worse for the loss of his trouble of mind, than better. Wherefore, if my guilt lay hard upon me, then I should cry that the Blood of Christ might take it off: and if it was going off without it, (for the sense of Sin would be sometimes as if it would die, and go quite away) then I would also strive to fetch it upon my heart again, by bringing the punishment for sin in Hell Fire upon my Spirit, and should cry, *Lord, let it not go off my Heart but the right way, but by the Blood of Christ, and by the application of thy mercy thorow him to my Soul:* for that Scripture lay much upon me, *Without shedding of Blood there is no Remission*, Heb. 9. 22: And that which made Me the more afraid of this, was because I had seen some, who tho when they were under wounds of conscience, would cry and pray, yet seeking rather present Ease from their Trouble, then pardon for their sin, cared not how they lost their guilt, so they got it out of their mind: now having got it

off

off the wrong way, it was not sanctified unto them, but they grew harder and blinder, and more wicked after their trouble. This made me afraid, and made me cry to God the more, that it might not be so with me.

77. And now was I sorry that God had made Me a Man, for I feared *I* was a Reprobate: I counted Man, as unconverted, the most doleful of all the Creatures: Thus being afflicted and tossed about my sad condition, *I* counted my self alone, and above the most of Men unblest.

78. Yea, I thought it impossible that ever I should attain to so much goodness of heart, as to thank God that he had made Me a man. Man indeed is the most noble, by creation, of all the creatures in the visible World, but by sin he had made himself the most ignoble. The beasts, birds, fishes, &c. I blessed their condition, for they had not a sinful Nature, they were not obnoxious to the wrath of God, they were not to go to Hell fire after Death, I could therefore a rejoyced; had my condition been as any of theirs.

79. In this condition I went a great while, but when comforting time was come, I heard one preach a Sermon upon these words in the *Song*, (*Song.* 4. 1.) *Behold thou art fair, my Love, behold thou art fair*, but at that time he made these two words, *MY LOVE*, his chief and subject matter; from which after he had a little opened the Text, he observed these several conclusions, 1. *That the Church, and so every saved Soul, is Christ's Love, when loveless.* 2. *Christs Love without a cause.* 3. *Christ's*

Christ's Love, when hated of the World. 4. *Christ's Love when under Temptation and under desertion.* 5. *Christ's Love from first to last.*

80. But I got nothing by what he said at present, only when he came to the application of the fourth Particular, this was the word he said, *If it be so that the saved Soul is Christ's Love, when under temptation and desertion: then poor tempted Soul, when thou art assaulted and afflicted with temptations, and the hiding of God's Face, yet think on these two Words,* MY LOVE, still.

81. So as I was going home, these words came again into my thoughts, and I well remember as they came in, I said thus in my heart, *What shall I get by thinking on these two words?* This thought had no sooner passed through my heart, but these words began thus to kindle in my spirit, *Thou art my Love, thou art my Dove,* twenty times together; and still as they ran thus in my mind, they waxed stronger and warmer, and began to make me look up; but being as yet between hope and fear, I still replied in my heart, *But is it true? but is it true?* At which that sentence fell in upon me, *He wist not that it was true which was done unto him of the Angel,* Acts 12. 9.

82. Then I began to give place to the Word, which with power did over and over make this joyful sound within my soul, *Thou art my Love, thou art my Love, and nothing shall separate thee from my Love!* and with that, *Rom.* 8. 39. came into my mind. Now was my heart filled full of comfort and hope, and now I could believe that my sins

should be forgiven me, yea I was now so taken with the love and mercy of God, that I remember, I could not tell how to contain till I got home, I thought I could have spoken of his Love and have told of his mercy to Me, even to the very Crows that sat upon the plow'd lands before Me, had they been capable to have understood Me, wherefore I said in my soul with much gladness, *Well, I would I had a Pen and Ink here, I would write this down before I go any further, for surely I will not forget this fourty years hence*; but alas! within less then fourty days I began to question all again, and by times, fell to my old courses again which made me begin to question all still.

83. Yet still at times, I was helped to believe that it was a true manifestation of Grace unto my Soul, though I had lost much of the life and savour of it. Now about a week or fortnight after this, I was much followed by this Scripture; *Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you*, Luk. 22. 31. and sometimes it would sound so loud within me, yea, & as it were call so strongly after me, that once above all the rest, I turned my head over my shoulder, thinking verily that some man had behind Me called Me, being at a great distance, Me thought he called so loud, it came as I have thought since to have stirred Me up to prayer and to watchfulness. It came to acquaint Me that a cloud and storm was coming down upon Me, but I understood it not. Also as I remember, that time as it called to me so loud, it was the last time that it sounded in mine ears, but methinks

I

I hear ſtill with what a loud voice theſe words, *Simon, Simon* ſounded in my ears. I thought verily, as I have told you, that ſome body had called after Me that was half a mile behind Me; and although that was not my name, yet it made Me ſuddenly look behind Me, believing that he that called ſo loud meant Me.

85. But ſo fooliſh was I, and ignorant, that I knew not the reaſon of this ſound, (which as I did both ſee and feel ſoon after, was ſent from Heaven as an Alarm to awaken me to provide for what was coming) onely it would make Me muſe, and wonder in my mind to think what ſhould be the reaſon that this Scripture, and that at this rate, ſo often, and ſo loud, ſhould ſtill be ſounding and rattling in mine ears. But, as I ſaid before, I ſoon after perceived the end of God therein.

86. For about the ſpace of a Moneth after, a very great ſtorm came down upon Me, which handled Me twenty times worſe then all I had met with before: It came ſtealing upon Me, now by one piece, then by another; firſt, all my comfort was taken from Me, then darkneſs ſeized upon Me, after which, whole floods of blaſphemies, both againſt God, Chriſt, and the Scriptures, was poured upon my Spirit to my great confuſion and aſtoniſhment. Theſe blaſphemous thoughts were ſuch as ſtirred up queſtions in Me againſt the very *Being* of God, and of his onely beloved *Son*; as whether there were in truth a God or Chriſt? And whether the Holy Scriptures were not rather a fable and cunning Story, then the holy and pure Word of God.

87. The

87. The temper also would much assault Me with this: *How can you tell but that the* Turks *had as good Scriptures to prove their* Mahomet *the Saviour, as we have to prove our* Jesus *is: and could I think that so many ten thousands, in so many Countries and Kingdoms, should be without the knowledge of the right way to Heaven, (if there were indeed a Heaven) and that we only, who live in a corner of the Earth, should alone be blest therewith? Every one doth think his own Religion righteſt, both Jews, and Moors, and Pagans; and how if all our Faith, and Christ, and Scriptures, should be but a think so too.*

88. Sometime I have endeavoured to argue against these suggestions, and to set some of the Sentences of blessed *Paul* against them; but alas! I quickly felt, when I thus did, such arguings as these would return again upon me; *Though we made so great a matter of* Paul, *and of his Words, yet how could I tell but that in very deed, he, being a subtile and cunning man, might give himself up to deceive with strong delusions, and also take the pains and travel to undo and destroy his Fellows.*

89. These suggestions (with many other which at this time I may not, nor dare not utter, neither by Word or Pen) did make such a seizure upon my Spirit, and did so over-weigh my heart, both with their number, continuance, and fiery force, that I felt, as if there were nothing else but these from morning to night within Me, and as though indeed there could be room for nothing else; and also concluded, that God had in very wrath to my

Soul,

Soul, given me up to them, to be carried away with them, as with a mighty whirl-wind.

90. Only by the diſtaſte that they gave unto my Spirit, *I felt there was ſomething in Me that refuſed to embrace them*: but this conſideration I then only had, when God gave me leave to ſwallow my ſpittle, otherwiſe the noiſe, and ſtrength, and force of theſe temptations would drown and overflow, and, as it were, bury all ſuch thoughts, or the remembrance of any ſuch thing. While I was in this temptation, I ſhould find often my mind ſuddenly put upon it, to curſe and ſwear, or to ſpeak ſome grievous thing of God, or Chriſt his Son, and of the Scriptures.

91. Now I thought, *ſurely I am poſſeſſed of the Devil*; at other times again I thought I ſhould be bereft of my wits, for in ſtead of lauding and magnifying of God the Lord with others, if I have but heard him ſpoken of, preſently ſome moſt horrible blaſphemous thought or other would bolt out of my heart againſt him. So that whether I did think that God was, or again did think there were no ſuch thing; no love, nor peace, nor gracious diſpoſition could I feel within me.

92. Theſe things did ſink Me into very deep deſpair, for I concluded that ſuch things could not poſſibly be found againſt them that loved God. I often, when theſe temptations have been with force upon Me, did compare my ſelf in the caſe of ſuch a Child, whom ſome Gypſie hath by force took up in her arms, and is carrying from Friend and Countrey; kick ſometimes I did, and

and also shriek and cry; but yet I was as bound in the wings of the temptation, and the Wind would carry Me away. I thought also of *Saul*, and of the evil spirit that did possess him, and did greatly fear that my condition was the same with that of his, 1 *Sam.*16.14.

93. In these days, when I have heard others talk of what was the sin against the Holy Ghost, then would the Tempter so provoke Me to desire to that sin, that I was as if I could not, must not, neither should be quiet until I had committed that; now no sin would serve but that: if it were to be committed by speaking of such a word, then I have been as if my Mouth would have spoken that word whether I would or no; and in so strong a measure was this temptation upon Me, that often I have been ready to clap my hand under my Chin, to hold my mouth from opening; and to that end also I have had thoughts at other times to leap with my head downward into some Muck-hil-hole or other, to keep my Mouth from speaking.

94. Now again I beheld the condition of the Dog and Toad, and counted the estate of every thing that God had made, far better then this dreadful state of mine, and such as my Companions was: yea, gladly would I have been in the condition of Dog or Horse, for I know they had no Soul to perish under the everlasting weight of Hell for sin, as mine was like to do: Nay, and though I saw this, felt this, and was broken to pieces with it; yet that which added to my sorrow,

was, that I could not find, that with all my Soul I did desire deliverance. That Scripture also did tear and rend my Soul in the midst of these distractions, *The Wicked are like the troubled Sea which cannot rest, whose waters cast up myre and dirt; There is no peace to the wicked, saith my God*, Isa.57. 20, 21.

95. And now my heart was at times exceeding hard, if I would have given a thousand pound for a Tear I could not shed one, no nor sometimes scarce desire to shed one. *I* was much dejected to think that this would be my Lot! I saw some could Mourn and Lament their sins, and others again could Rejoice and bless God for Christ, and others again could quiet talk of, and with gladness remember the Word of God, while I onlie was in the storm or tempest. This much sunk Me, I thought my condition was alone, I should therefore much bewail my hard hap, but get out of, or get rid of these things I could not.

96. While this temptation lasted, which was about a Year, *I* could attend upon none of the Ordinances of God, but with sore and great affliction; yea, then was I most distressed with blasphemies: if I have been hearing the Word, then uncleanness, blasphemies, and despair, would hold *Me* a Captive there; if I have been reading, then sometimes *I* had sudden thoughts to question all I read; sometimes again my *Mind* would be so strangelie snatched away, and possessed with other things, that *I* have neither known, nor regarded, nor remembred so much as the sentence that but now I have read.

97. In

97. In Prayer also I have been greatlie troubled at this time: Sometimes I have thought I have felt him behind me pull my cloaths: he would be also continuallie at me in the time of Prayer, to have done, break off, make haſt, you have prayed enough, and ſtay no longer: ſtill drawing my mind away. Sometimes also he would caſt in ſuch wicked thoughts as theſe, that I muſt pray to him, or for him; I have thought ſometimes of that, *Fall down*, or, *If thou wilt fall down, & worſhip me*, Mat. 4. 9

98. Alſo when becauſe *I* have had wandering thoughts in the time of this duty, I have laboured to compoſe my mind, and fix it upon God; then with great force hath the Temper laboured to diſtract Me and confound Me, and to turn away my mind, by preſenting to my heart and fancy, the form of a Buſh, a Bull, a Beſom, or the like, as if *I* ſhould pray to thoſe, to theſe alſo he would at ſometimes (eſpecially) ſo hold my mind, that I was as if I could think of nothing elſe, or pray to nothing elſe but to theſe, or ſuch as they.

99. Yet at times *I* ſhould have ſome ſtrong and heart-affecting apprehenſions of God, and the reality of the truth of his Goſpel: but oh how would my heart at ſuch times put forth it ſelf with unexpreſſible groanings! my whole Soul was then in every word, I ſhould cry with pangs after GOD, that he would be merciful unto me; but then I ſhall be daunted again with ſuch conceit as theſe, I ſhould think that GOD did mock at theſe my Prayers, ſaying, and that in the audience of the Holy Angels, This poor ſimple Wretch doth han-

ker after Me, as if *I* had nothing to do with my mercy, but to beſtow it on ſuch as he. Alas poor Soul! How art thou deceived, it is not for ſuch as thee to have favour with the Higheſt.

100. Then hath the Temper come upon me alſo with ſuch diſcouragements as theſe; *You are very hot for mercy, but I will cool you: this frame ſhal not laſt always*; *many have been as hot as you for a ſpurt, but I have quenched their Zeal?* (and with this, ſuch and ſuch who were fallen off, would be ſet before mine eyes) then *I* ſhould be afraid that I ſhould do ſo too: but thought *I*, I am glad this comes into my mind; well, I will watch and take what heed I can; *Though you do*, ſaid Satan, *I ſhall be too hard for you, I will cool you inſenſibly, by degrees, by little and little*; *what care I*, ſaith he, *though I be ſeven years in chilling your heart, if I can do it at laſt*; *continual rocking will lull a crying Child aſleep: I will ply it cloſe, but I will have my end accompliſhed: though you be burning hot at preſent, yet if I can pull you from this fire, I ſhall have you cold before it be long.* Theſe things brought me into great ſtraights; for as I at preſent could not find my ſelf fit for preſent death, ſo *I* thought to live long would make me yet more unfit; for time would make me forget all, and wear even the remembrance of the evil of ſin, the worth of Heaven, and the need I had of the Blood of Chriſt to waſh me, both out of mind and thought: but I thank Chriſt Jeſus, theſe things did not at preſent make me ſlack my crying, but rather did put me more upon it, (*like her who met with the Adulterer*, Deut. 22. 26.) in which days that was a good

good word to me, after I had suffered these things a while; *I am perswaded that neither Height nor Depth, nor Death, nor Life, &c. shal separate us from the Love of God which is in Christ Jesus*, Rom. 8. 38 And now I hoped long life should not destroy me nor make me miss of Heaven.

101. Yet *I* had some supports in this temptation, though they were then all questioned by me: That in the 3. of *Jeremiah* at the first, was something to me; and so was the consideration of the 5. verse of that Chapter, that though we have spoken and done evil things as we could, yet we should cry unto God, *My Father, thou art the Guide of my Youth*, and should return unto him.

102. I had also once a sweet glance from that in, 2 Cor. 5. 12. *For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the Righteousnes of God in him.* I remember that one day, as I was sitting in a Neighbours House, and there very sad at the consideration of my many blasphemies; and as I was saying in my mind, What ground have I to think that I, who have been so vile and abominable, should ever inherit eternal life; that word came suddenlie upon Me, *What shal we say to these things? If God be for us who can be against us?* Rom. 8. 31. That also was an help unto Me, *Because I live, you shall live also*, Joh. 14. 19. But these were but hints, touches, and short Visits, though verie sweet when present, onlie they lasted not; *but like to* Peter's *sheet, of a sudden were caught up from Me to Heaven again*, Acts 10. 16.

103. But afterwards the Lord did more fullie

and graciouſlie diſcover himſelf unto Me, and in deed did quite, not onlie deliver Me from the guilt that by theſe things was laid upon my Conſcience, but alſo from the verie filth thereof, for the temptation was removed, and I was put into my right Mind again, as other Chriſtians were.

104. I remember that one day as I was traveling into the Countrey, and muſing on the wickedneſs and blaſphemie of my heart, and conſidering of the enmitie that was in Me to God, that ſcripture came in my Mind, *He hath made peace by the blood of his Croſs*, Col. 1. 20. by which I was made to ſee, both again, and again that day, that God and my Soul were Friends by his Blood; yea, I ſaw that the Juſtice of God, and my ſinful Soul, could imbrace and kiſs each other through this Blood: this was a good day to Me, I hope I ſhal not forget it.

105. At another time, as I was ſet by the fire in my houſe, and muſing on my Wretchedneſs, the Lord made that alſo a precious Word unto Me, *For as much then as the Children are partakers of fleſh and blood, he alſo himſelf likewiſe took part of the ſame, that through Death, he might deſtroy him that had the power of Death, that is the Devil; and deliver thoſe who through the fear of Death were all their life ſubject to Bondage*, Heb. 2. 14, 15. I thought that the Glory of thoſe Words was then ſo weighty on me, that *I* was both once and twice ready to ſwoon as I ſat, yet not with Grief and trouble, but with ſolid joy and peace.

106. At this time alſo *I* ſat under the Miniſtry of holy *Mr. Gifford*, whoſe Doctrine, by Gods grace, was

was much for my ſtability. This man made it much his buſineſs to deliver the people of God from all thoſe falſe and unſound reſts that by Nature we are prone to take ſpecial heed, that we took not up any truth upon truſt, as from this or that; or any other man or men, but to cry mightilie to God, that he would convince us of the realitie thereof, and ſet us down therein by his own Spirit in the Holy word; for, ſaid he, if you do otherwiſe, when temptations come, if ſtrongly, you not having received them with evidence from Heaven, will find you want that help and ſtrength now to reſiſt, as once you thought you had.

107. This was as ſeaſonable to my Soul, as the former and latter rain in their ſeaſon; for I had found, and that by ſad experience, the truth of theſe his words. (*For I* had felt, *no Man can ſay*, eſpeciallie when tempted of the Devil, *that Jeſus Chriſt is Lord, but by the Holy Ghoſt*,) Wherefore I found my ſoul, through Grace, verie apt to drink in this Doctrine, and to incline to pray to GOD that in nothing that pertained to Gods Glorie, and my own eternal happineſs, He would ſuffer Me to be without the confirmation thereof from Heaven; for now *I* ſaw clearlie there was an exceeding difference betwixt the notion of fleſh and blood, and the Revelations of God in Heaven; alſo a great difference between that Faith that is fained, and according to Mans Wiſdom, and of that which comes by a Man being born thereto of God, *Matth.* 16, 15. 1 *John* 5. 1.

108. But Oh! now, how was my Soul led from Truth

Truth to Truth by God! even from the Birth and Cradle of the Son of God, to his Aſcenſion and ſecond coming from Heaven to judge the World.

109. Truly I then found upon this account the great God was verie good unto Me, for to my remembrance, there was not anie thing that then I cried to God to make known and reveal unto Me, but He was pleaſed to do it for Me, I mean not one part of the Goſpel of the Lord Jeſus, but I was orderlie led into it; Me thought I ſaw with great evidence, from the Relation of the four Evangeliſts, the wonderful work of God, in giving Jeſus Chriſt to ſave us, from his conception and birth, even to his ſecond coming to Judgement: Me thought I was as if I had ſeen him born, as if I had ſeen him grow up, as if I had ſeen him walk through this World, from the Cradle to the Croſs, to which alſo when he came, I ſaw how gently he gave himſelf to be hanged and nailed on it for my ſins and wicked doings; alſo as I was muſing on this his progreſs, that dropped on my Spirit, *He was Ordained for the ſlaughter*, 1 Pet. 1. 12, 20.

110. When I have conſidered alſo the truth of his Reſurrection, and have remembred that word, *touch me not Mary*, &c. I have ſeen, as if he had leaped out at the Graves Mouth, for joy that he was raiſen again, and had got the conqueſt over our dreadful foes, *John* 20. 17. I have alſo in the Spirit ſeen him a Man on the right Hand of God the Father for Me, and have ſeen the manner of his coming from Heaven to Judge the World with Glory, and have been confirmed in theſe things

by

by these Scriptures following, *Acts* 1. 9, 10. & 7. 56. & 10 42. *Heb.* 7. 24. & 8. 38. *Rev.* 1 18. 1 *Thes.* 4. 17, 18. Once I was troubled to know whether the Lord Jesus was Man as well as God, and God as well as Man; and truly in those days, let men say what they would, unless I had it with evidence from Heaven, all was nothing to Me, I counted not my self set down in any truth of God; well, I was much troubled about this Point, and could not tell how to be resolved: at last, that in the fifth of the *Revelations* came into my Mind; *And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the Throne, and of the four Beasts, and in the midst of the Elders stood a Lamb*; in the midst of the Throne there is his God-head, in the midst of the Elders, there is his Man-hood; but O me thought this did glister, it was a goodly touch, and gave me sweet satisfaction; that other Scripture also did help Me much in this, *To us a Child is born, to us a Son is given, and the Government shall be upon his shoulder, and his Name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace*, &c. *Isa.* 9. 6.

111. Also besides these teachings of God in his Word, the Lord made use of two things to confirm Me in these things, the one was the Errors of the *Quakers*, and the other was the guilt of sin, for as the *Quakers* did oppose his Truth, so God did the more confirm Me in it, by leading me into the Scriptures that did wonderfully maintain it; and as *I* said, the guilt of sin did help Me much, for still as that would come upon Me, the Blood of Christ

Christ did take it off again, and again, and again, and that too, sweetly according to the Scriptures. O Friends, cry to God to reveal Jesus Christ unto you, *there is none teacheth like him.*

112. It would be too long here to stay, to tell you in particular how God did set Me down in all the things of Christ, and how he did, that he might so do, lead me into his words, yea and also how he did open them unto Me, and make them shine before me, and cause them to dwell with me, talk with Me, and comfort Me over and over, both of his own being, and the being of his Son, and Spirit, and Word, and Gospel.

113. Only this, as I said before, I will say unto you again, that in general he was pleased to take this course with Me; first to suffer Me to be afflicted with temptation concerning them, and then reveal them to me; as sometimes I should lye under great guilt for sin, even crushed to the ground therewith, and then the Lord would shew me the death of Christ, yea and so sprinkling my Conscience with his blood, that I should find, and that before I was aware, that in that Conscience, where but just now did reign and rage the Law, even there would rest and abide the Peace and Love thorow Christ.

114. Now had I an evidence for heaven with many Golden Seals thereon, all hanging in my sight; now could I remember this manifestation, and the other discovery of Grace with comfort; and should often long and desire that the last day were come, that *I* might be for ever inflamed with

with the sight, and joy, and communion of him, whose Head was crowned with Thorns, whose Face was spit on, and Body broken, and Soul made an offering for my sins: for whereas before I lay continually trembling at the Mouth of Hell; now me thought I was got so far therefrom, that I could not, when I looked back, scarce discern it; and O thoght I, that I were fourscor years old now, that I might die quickly, that my Soul might be gone to rest.

115. But before I had got thus far out of these my temptations, I did greatly long to see some ancient Godly man's Experience, who had write some hundred of years before I was born; for, for those who had writ our days, I thought (but *I* desire them now to pardon me) that they had Writ only that which others felt, or else had, thorow the strength of their Wits & Parts, studied to answer such Objections as they perceived others were perplexed with, without going down themselves into the deep. Well, after many longings in my mind, the God in whose hand are all our days, did cast into my hand (one day) a Book of *Martin Luther* his Comment on the *Galatians*, so old that it was ready to fall piece from piece, if I did but turn it over. Now *I* was pleased much that such an old Book had fallen into my hand; the which, when I had but a little way perused, I found my condition in his experience, so largely and profoundly handled, as if his Book had been written out of my heart; this made me marvel: for thus thought I, this man could not know any thing

thing of the ſtate of Chriſtians now, but muſt needs write and ſpeak the Experience of former days. Beſides, he doth moſt gravely alſo in that Book debate of the riſe of theſe temptations, namely Blaſphemy, Deſperation, and the like, ſhewing that the Law of *Moſes*, as well as the Devil, Death, and Hell, hath a very great hand therein; the which at firſt was very ſtrange to me, but by conſidering and watching, I found it ſo indeed. But of Particulars here, I intend nothing, only this me thinks I muſt let fall before all men, I do prefer this Book of Mr. *Luther* upon the *Galatians*, (excepting the Holy Bible) before all the Books that ever I have ſeen, as moſt fit for a wounded Conſcience.

116. And now I found, as I thought, that I loved Chriſt dearly. O Me thought my Soul cleaved unto him, my affections cleave unto him. I felt love to him as hot as fire, and now as *Job* ſaid, I thought *I* ſhould die in my beſt: but I did quickly find, that my great Love was but little, and that I, who had, as I thought, ſuch burning Love to Jeſus Chriſt, could let him go again for a very triffle. God can tell how to abaſe us; and can hide pride from Man. Quickly after this my love was tried to purpoſe.

117. For after the Lord had in this Manner thus graciouſly delivered me from this great and ſore Temptation, and had ſet me down ſo ſweetly in the *Faith* of his Holy Goſpel, and had given me ſuch ſtrong conſolation and bleſſed evidence from Heaven, touching my intereſt in his love through Chriſt;

Christ; the Tempter came upon Me again, and that with a more grievous and dreadful temptation than before.

118. And that was to *sell and part with this most blessed Christ, to exchange him for the things of this life, for any thing*; the temptation lay upon me for the space of a year, and did follow me so continually, that I was not rid of it one day in a month, no not sometimes one hour in many days together, unless I was asleep.

119. And though, in my Judgment, I was perswaded, that those who were once effectually in Christ, (as I hoped, through his Grace, I had seen my self) could never lose him for ever, (*for the Land shall not be sold for ever, for the Land is mine*, saith God, *Levit.* 25. 23.) yet it was a continual vexation to Me, to think that I should have so much as one such thought within Me, against a Christ, a Jesus, that had done for Me as he had done.

120. But it was neither my dislike of the thought, nor yet any desire and endeavour to resist it, that in the least did shake or abate the continuation, or force and strength thereof; for it did always in almost whatever I thought, intermix it self therewith, in such sort that I could neither eat my food, stoop for a pin, chop a stick, or cast mine eye to look on this or that, but still the temptation would come, *Sell Christ for this*, or *sell Christ for that*, *Sell him*, *sell him*.

121. Sometimes it would run in my thoughts not so little as an hundred times together, Sell

him, ſell him, ſell him: againſt which, I may ſay, for whole hours together I have been forced to ſtand as continually leaning and forcing my ſpirit againſt it, leſt luppily before I were aware, ſome wicked thought might ariſe in my heart that might conſent thereto; and ſometimes alſo the Tempter would make Me believe I had conſented to it, then ſhould I be as tortured upon a Rack for whole days together.

122. This temptation did put Me to ſuch ſcares leſt *I* ſhould at ſometimes, I ſay, conſent thereto, and be overcome therewith, that by the very force of my Mind in labouring to gainſay and reſiſt this wickedneſs, my very body would be put into action or motion, by way of puſhing or thruſting, ſtill anſwering, as faſt as the deſtroyer ſaid *ſell him*, I will not, I will not, I will not, no not for thouſands, thouſands, thouſands of Worlds: thus reckoning leſt I ſhould in the midſt of theſe aſſaults, ſet too low a value of him, even untill I ſcarce well knew where I was, or how to be compoſed again.

123. At theſe ſeaſons he would not let Me my food at quiet, but forſooth, when I was ſet at the Table at my Meat, I muſt go hence to pray, I muſt leave my food now, juſt now, ſo counterfeit holy would this Devil be. When I was thus tempted, *I* ſhould ſay in my ſelf, now I am at meat, let Me make an end: No ſaid he, I muſt do it now, or I ſhould diſpleaſe God, and deſpiſe Chriſt. Wherefore I was much afflicted with theſe things: and becauſe of the ſinfulneſs of my nature (imagining

that

that these things were impulses from God? I should deny to do it as if I denyed God; and then should I be as guilty because I did not obey a temptation of the Devil, as if I had broken the Law of GOD indeed.

124. But to be brief, one morning as I did lye in my Bed, I was, as at other times, most fiercely assaulted with this temptation, *to sell and part with Christ*; the wicked suggestion still running in my mind, *Sell him, sell him, sell him, sell him*, as fast as a Man could speak; against which also in my mind, as at other times I answered, No, no, not for thousands, thousands, at least twenty times together: but at last, after much striving, even unill I was almost out of breath, I I felt this thought pass through my heart, *Let him go if he will*! and *I* thought also that *I* felt my heart consent thereto, and where was my love to Christ now.

125. Now was the Battel won, and down fell *I*, as a Bird that is shot from the top of a Tree, into great guilt and fearful despair; thus getting out of my Bed, I went moping into the field, but God knows, with as heavy a heart as mortal man, I think, could bear; where for the space of two hours, I was like a man bereft of life, and as now past all recovery, and bound over to eternal punishment.

126. And withal, that Scripture did seize upon my Soul, *Or profane person, as* Esau, *who for one morsel of meat, sold his birth-right, for ye know, how that afterwards, when he would have inherited*

the bleſsing, he was rejected; for he found no place of repentance, though he ſought it carefully with tears, Heb. 12. 16, 17.

127 Theſe words were to my Soul like fetters of Braſs to my Legs, in the continual ſound of which I went for ſeveral months together. But about ten or eleven a clock on that day, as I was walking under a Hedge, full of ſorrow and guilt, God knows, and bemoaning my ſelf for this hard hap, that ſuch a thought ſhould ariſe within me, ſuddenly this ſentence bolted in on me, *The Blood of Chriſt remits all guilt*; at this I made a ſtand in my Spirit; with that, this word took hold upon me, *The Blood of Jeſus Chriſt his Son cleanſeth us from all ſin*, 1 John 1. 7. Now I began to conceive peace in my Soul, and methought I ſaw as if the Tempter did lear and ſteal away from me, as being aſhamed of what he had done. At the ſame time alſo I had my ſin and the Blood of Chriſt, thus repreſented to me, that my ſin, when compared to the Blood of Chriſt, was no more to it, than this little clod or ſtone before me, is to this vaſt and wide field that here I ſee: This gave me good encouragement for the ſpace of two or three hours, in which time alſo methought I ſaw, by Faith, the Son of God as ſuffering for my ſins. But becauſe it tarried not, I therefore ſunk in my ſpirit under exceeding guilt again.

128. But chiefly by the aforementioned Scripture, concerning *Eſaus* ſelling of his birth-right, for that Scripture would lie all day long, all the week long; yea, all the year long in my mind, and

and hold me down, so that I could by no means lift up my self, for when *I* would strive to turn me to this Scripture, or that for relief, still that Sentence would be sounding in me; for ye know how that afterwards, when he would have inherited the blessing, he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.

129. Sometimes indeed *I* should have a touch from that in *Luke* 22. 31. *I have prayed for thee, that thy Faith fail not*; but it would not abide upon me; neither could I indeed when I considered my state, find ground to conceive in the least, that there should be the root of that Grace within me, having sinned as I had done. Now was *I* tore and rent in a heavy case, for many dayes together.

130. Then began I with sad and careful heart, to consider of the nature and largeness of my sin, and to search in the Word of God, if *I* could in any place espie a Word of promise, or any encouraging Sentence by which I might take relief. Wherefore I began to consider that third of *Mark*, *All manner of sins and blasphemies shall be forgiven unto the Sons of Men, wherewithsoever they shall blaspheme*: Which place me thought, at a blush, did contain a large and glorious Promise for the pardon of high offences; but considering the place more fully, *I* thought it was rather to be understood, as relating more chiefly to those who had, while in a natural estate. Committed such things as there are mentioned, but not to me, who had not only received Light and Mercy, but that had both after, and also contrary to that, so slighted Christ as *I* had done.

131. I feared therefore that this wicked sin of mine might be that sin unpardonable, of which he there thus speaketh, *But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost, hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation*, Mar. 3. And I did the rather give credit to this, because of that sentence in the *Hebrews*, *For you know how that afterwards, when he would have inherited the Blessing, he was rejected; for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears*: For this stuck always with me.

132. And now began I to labour to call again time that was past, wishing a thousand times twice told, that the day was yet to come, when I should be tempted to such a sin; concluding with great indignation, both against my heart and all assaults, how I would rather have been torn in pieces, than found a consenter thereto: but alas! these thoughts and wishings, and resolvings, were now too late to help Me; the thought had passed my heart, God hath let me go, and I am fallen: O, thought I, *that it was with me as in months past, as in the days when God persecuted me!* Job 29. 2.

133. Then again, being loth and unwilling to perish, I began to compare my sin with others, to see if I could find that any of those that are saved had done as I had done. So I considered *David*'s Adultery and Murder, and found them most hainous crimes, and those too committed after Light and Grace received: but yet by considering, I perceived that his transgressions were onely such as were against the Law of *Moses*, from which the

Lord

Lord Christ could with the consent of his Word deliver him: but mine was against Gospel, yea against the Mdiator thereof, I had sold my Saviour.

134. Now again should I be as if racked upon the Wheel: When I considered, that besides the guilt that possessed Me, I should be so void of Grace, so bewitched: What, thought *I*, must it be no sin but this? must it needs be the *great transgression*? Psal. 19. 13. Must that wicked one touch my Soul? 1 *John* 5. 18. O what stings did I find in all these Sentences!

135 What? thought I, is there but one sin that is unpardonable! but one sin that layeth the Soul without the reach of Gods mercy, and must I be guilty of that! Is there but one sin amongst so many millions of sins, for which there is no forgiveness, and must I commit this? Oh! unhappy sin! Oh unhappy Man! These things would so break and confound my Spirit, that I could not tell what to do, I thought at times they would have broke my wits, and still to aggravate my misery, that would run in my mind, *You know how that afterwards, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected. Oh! none knows the terrors of these days but my self.*

136. After this, I came to consider of *Peter's* sin which he committed in denying his Master; and indeed this came nigheſt to mine, of any that I could find; for he had denied his Saviour, as I after Light and Mercy received; yea, and that too, after warning given him: I also considered

that

that he did it both once and twice and that after time to consider betwixt. But though I put all these circumstances together, that if possible I might find help, yet I considered again, that his was but *a denyal of his Master*, but mine was *a selling of my Saviour*. Wherefore I thought with with my self, that I came nearer to *Judas*, than either to *David* or *Peter*.

137. Here again, my torment would flame out, and afflict me; yea, it would grind me, as it were, to powder, to consider the preservation of God towards others, while I fell into the snare: For in my thus considering of other Mens sins, and comparing of them with my own, I could evidently see God preserved them notwithstanding their Wickedness, and would not let them, as he had let Me, become a Son of Perdition.

138. But O how did my Soul at this time prize the preservation that God did set about his People, Ah, how safely did I see them walk, whom God had hedged in, they were within his care, protection and special providence: though they were full as bad as I by nature, yet because he loved them, he would not suffer them to fall without the range of Mercy: but as for Me *I* was gone, *I* had done it, he would not preserve Me, nor keep Me, but suffered Me, because *I* was a Reprobate, to fall as *I* had done. Now did those blessed places that speak of Gods keeping his People, shine like the Sun before Me, though not to comfort Me, but to shew Me the blessed state and heritage of those whom the Lord had blessed.

139. Then

139. Then again, *I* began to compare my ſin with the ſin of *Judas*, that if poſsible I might find that mine differed from that which in truth is unpardonable; and, O thought I, if it ſhould be but the breadth of an hair, what a happy condition is my Soul in! and by conſidering, *I* found that *Judas* did his intentionally, but mine was againſt my ſtrivings; beſides, his was committed with much deliberation, but mine in a fearful hurry, on a ſudden. Thus I was toſſed to and fro, like the Locuſts, and driven from trouble to ſorrow; hearing always the ſound of *Eſau*'s fall in mine ears, and of the dreadful conſequences thereof.

140. Yet this conſideration about *Judas* his ſin, was for a while ſome little relief unto me: for I ſaw I had not, as to the Circumſtances, tranſgreſſed ſo foully as he; but this was quickly gone again, for I thought with my ſelf there might be more ways than one to commit the unpardonable ſin; alſo I thought that there might be degrees of that, as well as of other tranſgreſſions; wherefore, for ought I yet could perceive, this iniquity of mine might be ſuch as might never be paſſed by.

141. I was often now aſhamed that I ſhould be like ſuch an ugly man as *Judas*: I thought alſo how loathſome I ſhould be unto all the Saints at the Day of Judgement, inſomuch that now I could ſcarce ſee a good Man, that *I* believed had a good Conſcience, but I ſhould feel my heart tremble at him, while I was in his preſence. Oh! now I ſaw a glory in walking with God, and what a mercy it was to have a good Conſcience before him.

142. I

142. I was much about this time tempted to content my ſelf, by receiving ſome falſe Opinion, as that there ſhould be no ſuch thing as a Day of Judgement; that we ſhould not riſe again, and that ſin was no ſuch grievous thing. The Tempter ſuggeſting thus. For if theſe things ſhould indeed be true, yet to believe otherwiſe; would yield you eaſe for the preſent. If you muſt periſh, never torment your ſelf ſo much before hand, drive the thoughts of damning out of your mind, by poſſeſſing your mind with ſome ſuch concluſions that *Atheiſts* and *Ranters* uſe to help themſelves withal.

143. But oh! when ſuch thoughts have paſſed thorrow my heart, how, as it were with a ſtep hath Death and Judgement been in my view. Me thought the Judge ſtood at the door, *I* was as if 'twas come already: ſo that ſuch things could have no entertainment; but me thinks I ſee by this, that Satan will uſe any means to keep the Soul from Chriſt. He loveth not an awakened frame of ſpirit, ſecurity, blindneſs, darkneſs, and error, is the very Kingdom and Habitation of the Wicked one.

144. I found it hard work now to pray to God, becauſe deſpair was ſwallowing Me up. I thought I was as with a Tempeſt driven away from God, for always when I cried to God for mercy, this would come in, 'its too late; I am loſt, God hath let Me fall not to my correction, but condemnation: My ſin is unpardonable, and I know concerning *Eſau*, how that after he had ſold his Birth-right, he would have received the Bleſſing, but was rejected. 145. Then

145. Then was I ſtruck into a very great trembling, inſomuch that at ſometimes I could for whole days together feel my very body, as well as my mind, to ſhake and totter under the ſence of the dreadful Judgment of God, that ſhould fall on thoſe that have ſinned that moſt fearful and unpardonable ſin. *I* felt alſo ſuch a clogging and heat at my ſtomach, by reaſon of this my terrour, that I was, eſpecially at ſome times, as if my breaſt-bone would have ſplit in ſunder. Then I thought of that concerning *Judas, Who by his falling head-long, burſt aſunder, and all his bowels guſhed out*, Acts 1.

146. I feared alſo that this was the mark that the Lord did ſet on *Caan*, even continual fear and trembling under the heavy load of guilt that he had charged on him for the Blood of his Brother *Abel*. Thus did I wind, and twine, and ſhrink under the burden that was upon me; which burden alſo did ſo oppreſs Me, that I could neither ſtand nor go, nor lye either at reſt or quiet.

147. Yet that ſaying would ſometimes come to mind, *He hath received gifts for the rebellious*, Pſal. 68. 18. *The rebellious*; thought *I*, Why ſurely they are ſuch as once were under ſubjection to their Prince, even thoſe who after they have ſworn ſubjection to his Government, have taken up Arms againſt him.

148. This ſometimes *I* thought on, and ſhould labour to take hold thereof; that ſome, though ſmall, refreſhment might have been conceived by me: but in this alſo I miſſed of my deſire, I was driven

driven with force beyond it, like a man that is going to the place of execution, even by that place where he would fain creep in, and hide himself, but may not.

149. Again, after I had thus considered the sins of the Saints in particular, and found mine went beyond them; then I began to think thus with my self. Set case *I* should put all theirs together, and mine alone against them, might *I* not then find some encouragement? for if mine, though bigger than any one, yet should but be equal to all, then there is hopes: for that Blood that hath vertue enough to wash away all theirs, hath vertue enough to do away mine, though this one be full as big, if no bigger, than all theirs. Here again *I* should consider the sin of *David*, of *Solomon*, of *Manasseh*, of *Peter*, and the rest of the great offenders, and should also labour what *I* might, with fairness, to aggravate and heighten their sins by several circumstances.

150. I should think with my self that *David* shed blood to cover his Adultery and that by the Sword of the Children of *Ammon*, a work that could not be done but by continuance, deliberate contrivance which was a great aggravation to his sin.

But then this would turn upon me: Ah, but these were but sins against the Law, from which there was a Jesus sent to save them, but yours is against the Saviour, and who shall save you from that.

151. Then I thought on *Solomon*, and how he sin-

ned, in loving ſtrange Women, in falling away to their Idols, in building them Temples, in doing this after light, in his old age, after great Mercy received: but the ſame concluſion that cut Me off in the former conſideration, cut Me off as to this: namely, that all thoſe were but Sins againſt the Law, for which God had provided a remedy, but I had ſold my Saviour, and there now remained no more Sacrifice for ſin.

152. I would then add to theſe Mens ſins the ſins of *Manaſſeh*, how that he built Altars for Idols in the houſe of the Lord, he alſo obſerved times, uſed inchantments, had to do with Wizzards, was a Witch, had his familiar ſpirits, burnt his Children in the fire in Sacrifice to Devils, and made the ſtreets of *Jeruſalem* run down with the blood of Innocents. Theſe thought I are great ſins, ſins of a Bloody colour; but yet it would turn again upon Me, they are none of them of the nature of yours, you have parted with Jeſus! you have ſold your Saviour!

153. This one conſideration would always kill my heart, *My ſin was point blank againſt my Savior*, and that too, at that height, that *I* had in my heart ſaid of him, *Let him go if he will.* O Me thought, this ſin was bigger then the ſins of a Country, of a Kingdom, or of the whole World, *no*, one pardonable, nor *all* of them together, was able to equal mine, mine out-went them every one.

154. Now *I* ſhould feel my mind to flee from God, as from the face of a dreadful Judge; yet this was my torment, I could not eſcape his hand. (*It*

is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, Heb. 10.) But blessed be his Grace, that Scripture in these flying fits would call as running after Me, *I have blotted out, as a thick Cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins: Return unto me, for I have redeemed thee*, Isa. 44. 22. But I could not return, but fled, though at sometimes it cried, *Return, return*, as if it did hollow after Me: But I feared to close in therewith, lest it should not come from God, for that other was still sounding in my Conscience, *For you know how that afterwards, when he would have inherited the Blessing, he was rejected*, &c.

155. Once as I was walking in a good Mans Shop, bemoaning to my self in my sad and doleful state, afflicting my self with abhorrence for this wicked and ungodly thought: lamenting also this hard hap of mine, for that I should commit so great a sin, greatly fearing I should not be pardoned; praying also in my heart, that if this sin of mine did differ from that against the Holy Ghost, the Lord would shew it Me: and being now ready to sink with fear, suddenly there was as if there had rushed in at the Window, the noise of wind upon Me, but very pleasant, and as if I had heard a voice speaking, *Didst ever refuse to be justified by the Blood of Christ?* and withal, my whole life of profession past, was in a moment opened to Me, wherein I was made to see, that designedly I had not, so my heart answered groaningly, No. Then fell with power that word of God upon Me, *See that ye refuse him not that speaketh*, Heb. 12. 24. What this was,

I

I know not: I have not yet in twenty years time, been able to make a Judgement of it. *I thought then what here I should be loath to speak.* But verily that sudden rushing wind, was as if an Angel had come upon Me; but both it and the Salutation I will leave until the day of Judgement, only this *I* say, it commanded a great calm in my Soul, it perswaded Me there might be hope; It shewed me, as I thought, what the sin unpardonable was, and that my Soul had yet the blessed priviledge to flie to Jesus Christ for Mercy. But I say, concerning this dispensation, I know not what yet to say unto it, which was also in truth the cause that at first I did not speak of it in the Book. I do now also leave it to be thought on by Men of sound Judgement. I lay not the stress of my Salvation thereupon but upon the Lord Jesus in the Promise; yet seeing I am here unfolding of my secret things, I thought it might not be altogether inexpedient to let this also shew it self, though I cannot now relate the Matter as there I did experience it. This lasted in the savour of it, for about three or four dayes, and then I began to mistrust, and to despair again.

156. Wherefore still my life hung in doubt before Me, *not knowing which way I should tip*; onely this I found my Soul desire, even to cast it self at the foot of Grace by prayer and supplication. But O 'twas hard for Me to bear the face to pray to this Christ for Mercy, against whom *I* had thus most vilely sinned! yet *I* knew this must be the way, for mercy was no where else.

157. Which when the Temper perceived, he

ſtrongly ſuggeſted to Me, *That I ought not to pray to God, for Prayer was not for any in my caſe, neither could it do me good, becauſe I had rejected the Mediator, by whom all Prayers came with Acceptance to God the Father, and without whom no Prayer could come into his preſence: wherefore now to pray is but to add ſin to ſin: Tea now to pray, ſeeing God hath caſt you off, is the next way to anger and offend him more than ever you did before.*

158. *For God* (ſaid he) *hath been weary of you for theſe ſeveral years already, becauſe you are none of his; your bawling in his ears hath been no pleaſant voice to him, and therefore he'll let you ſin this ſin, that you might be quite cut off, and will you pray ſtill*; This the Devil urged and ſet forth that in *Numbers*, when *Moſes* ſaid to the Children of *Iſrael*, *That becauſe they would not go up to poſſeſs the Land, when God would have them, therefore for ever after he did barr them out from thence, though they prayed they might with tears*, Num. 14. 36, 37, *&c.*

159. As 'tis ſaid in another place, *Exod.* 21. 14. *The Man that ſins preſumptuouſly, ſhall be taken from God's Altar, that he may die*; Even as *Joab* was by King *Solomon*, when he thought to find ſhelter there, 1 *Kings* 2. 27, 28. *&c.* Theſe places did pinch Me very ſore, yet my caſe being deſperate, I thought with my ſelf, I can but die, and if it muſt be ſo, it ſhall once be ſaid, that ſuch a one died at the foot of Chriſt in prayer; this I did, but with great difficulty, God doth know; for ſtill that ſaying about *Eſau* would be ſet at my heart, even like a flaming Sword, to keep the Way of the Tree of Life,

Life, leſt *I* ſhould take thereof, and live. O who knows how hard a thing I found it to come to God in Prayer!

160. I did alſo deſire the Prayers of the People of God for Me, but I feared that God would give them no heart to do it; yea I trembled in my ſoul to think that ſome or other of them ſhortly would tell me, that God had ſaid thoſe words to them, that he once did ſay to the Prophet concerning the Children of *Iſrael*, *Pray not for this People, for I have rejected them*, Jer. 11. 14. So, *Pray not for him for I have rejected him*: Yea, I thought that he had whiſpered this to ſome of them already, only they durſt not tell Me ſo, neither durſt I ask them of it, for fear it ſhould be ſo, it would make Me quite beſides my ſelf. *Man knows the beginning of ſin*, (ſaid *Spira*) *but who bounds the iſſues thereof!*

161. About this time *I* took an opportunity, to break my Mind to an Ancient Chriſtian; and told him all my caſe. I told him alſo, that I was afraid that I had ſinned the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt; and he told me, *he thought ſo too*. Here therefore *I* had but cold comfort, but talking a little more with him, *I* found him, though a good man, a ſtranger to much combate with the Devil. Wherefore *I* went to God again as well as I could, for mercie ſtill.

162. Now alſo did the Tempter begin to mock me in my miſery, ſaying, That ſeeing I had thus parted with the Lord Jeſus and provocked him to diſpleaſure who would have ſtood between my Soul, and the flame of devouring fire; there was now but one way, and that was, *to pray that God*

the Father would be the Mediator betwixt his Son and me, that we might be reconciled again, and that *I* might have that bleſſed Benefit in him that his bleſſed Saints enjoyed.

163. Then did that Scripture ſeize upon my Soul, *He is of one mind, and who can turn him?* Oh I ſaw 'twas as eaſie to perſwade him to make a new World, a new Covenant, or new Bible beſides that we have already, as to pray for ſuch a thing: this was to perſwade him, that what he had done already, was meer folly, and to perſwade with him to alter, yea, to diſſanull the whole Way of Salvation; and then would that ſaying rent my Soul aſunder, *Neither is there Salvation in any other, for there is none other Name under Heaven, given amongſt men, whereby we muſt be ſaved*, Acts 4. 12.

164. Now the moſt free, and full, and gracious Words of the Goſpel, were the greateſt torment to me; yea nothing ſo afflicted me as the thoughts of Jeſus Chriſt; for the remembrance of a Savior, becauſe I had caſt him off, brought both the villany of my ſin, and my loſs by it, to mind. O 'tis ſad to be deſtroyed by the Grace and mercie of God; to have the Lamb, the Saviour, turn Lyon, and Deſtroyer, *Rev. 6. I* alſo trembled, as I have ſaid, at the ſight of the *Saints* of God, eſpeciallie at thoſe that greatly loved him, and that made it their buſineſs to walk continuallie with him in this world: for they did both in their words, their carriages, and all their expreſsions of tenderneſs and fear to ſin againſt their precious *Savior*, condemn, lay

lay guilt upon, and also add continual affliction and shame unto my Soul. *The dread of them was put upon me, and I trembled at Gods* Samuels, 1 Sam. 16. 4.

165. Now also the Tempter began afresh to mock my Soul, saying, that Christ indeed did pity my case, and was sorry for my Loss: But for as much as I had sinned, and transgressed as I had done, he could by no means help Me, nor save Me from what I feared; For my sin was not of the nature of theirs, for whom he bled and died, neither was it counted with those that were laid to his charge when he hanged on the tree: therefore unless he should come down from Heaven, and die anew for this sin, though indeed he did greatly pity Me, yet I could have no benefit of him.

166. But O how this would add to my affliction to conceit that I should be guiltie of such a sin, for which he did not die. These thoughts would so confound Me, and imprison Me, and tie Me up from Faith, that I knew not what to do: but oh, thought I, that he would come down again! O that the work of Mans Redemption was yet to be done by Christ! How would I pray him, and intreat him to count and reckon this sin amongst the rest for which he died? But this would strike Me down; *Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more: Death hath no more Dominion over him,* Rom. 6. 9.

167. Thus by the strange and unusual Assaults of the tempter, was my Soul like a broken Vessel, driven, as with the Winds, and tossed sometimes

head

head-long into despair, sometimes upon the Covenant of works, and sometimes to wish that the new Covenant, and the conditions thereof might so far forth as I thought my self concerned, be turned another way, and changed. But in all these, *I* was but as those that jostle against the Rocks, more broken, scattered and rent. Oh, the unthought of imaginations, frights, fears, and terrors that are effected by a thorow application of guilt, and yielding to desperation. This is the *Man* that hath his dwelling among the tombs with the dead; that is alwayes crying out, and cutting himself with stones, *Mark* 5. 1, 2, 3. But I say, all in vain, desperation will not comfort him, the old Covenant will not save him. Nay, Heaven and Earth shall pass away before one jot or tittle of the Word and Law of Grace shall fail or be removed: this *I* saw, this I felt, and under this I groaned. Yet this advantage I got thereby; namelie, a further confirmation of the certainty of the Way of *S*alvation, and that the Scriptures were the Word of God. Oh! I cannot now express what then I saw and felt of the steadiness of Jesus Christ, the Rock of *M*ans Salvation, what was done, could not be undone, added to nor altered; indeed sin might drive the Soul beyond Christ, even the sin which is unpardonable but woe to him that was so driven, for the word would shut him out.

168. Thus was I alwayes sinking, whatever I did think or do. So one day I walked to a neighboring Town, and sat down upon a Settle in the Street, and fell into a very deep pause about the most

most fearful state my sin had brought me to; and after a long musing, I lifted up my head, but me thought I saw as if the Sun that shineth in the Heavens did grudge to give light, and as if the very stones in the Street, and tiles upon the Houses, did bend themselves against me. O how happy now was every creature over I was! for they stood fast, and kept their station, but I was gone and lost.

169. Then breaking out in the bitterness of my Soul, I said to my self, with a grievous sigh, *How can God comfort such a Wretch as I?* I had no sooner said it, but this returned upon me, as an eccho doth answer a voice, *This sin is not unto death.* At which I was as if I had been raised out of a Grave, and cried out again, *Lord, how couldst thou find out such a word as this?* For *I* was filled with admiration at the fitness, and also at the unexpectedness of the sentence.

170. Now I was in hopes that my sin was not unpardonable, but that there might be hopes for Me to obtain forgiveness, But O how Satan now did lay about him, for to bring Me down again! But he could by no means do it, neither this day, nor the most part of the next: for this good sentence stood like a Mil-post at my back. Yet towards the evening of the next day, I felt this word begin to leave me, and to withdraw its supportation from Me; and so *I* returned to my old fears again, but with a great deal of grudging and peevishness, for I feared the sorrow of it.

171. But the next day at evening, being under many fears, I went to seek the Lord; and as I prayed

prayed, *I* cried to him in these words; *O Lord, I beseech thee shew Me that that thou hast loved Me with an everlasting love*, Jer. 31. 3.

I had no sooner said it, but with sweetness it returned upon Me, *I have loved thee with an everlasting love.* Now I went to bed in quiet, also when I awaked the next morning, it was fresh upon my Soul.

172. But yet the Tempter left Me not, for it could not be so little as an hundred times, that he, that day, did labor to break my peace. O the combats and conflicts that I did then meet with! as I strove to hold by this Word, That of *Esau* would flie in my face like to lightning: *I* should be sometimes up and down twentie times in an hour. Yet God did bear me up, and keep my heart upon this word, from which I had also for several dayes together, very much sweetness and comfortable hopes of pardon. For thus it was made out to Me, *I loved thee whilst thou was committing this sin, I loved thee before, I love thee still, and I will love thee for ever.*

173. Yet I saw my sin most barbarous, and a filthie crime, and could not but conclude, and that with great shame and astonishment, that *I* had horribly abused the Holie Son of God, wherefore *I* felt my Soul greatly to love and pity him, and my bowels to yearn towards him: for *I* saw he was still my Friend, and did reward Me good for evil: yea, the Love and Affection that then did burn within to my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, did work at this time such a strong and hot desire of revenge-

revengement upon my self for the abuse I had done unto him, that, to speak as then I thought, had I a thousand gallons of blood within my veins, I could freely have spilt it all at the command and feet of this my Lord and Saviour.

174. And as *I* was thus in musing, and in my studies how to love the Lord, and to express my love to him, that saying came in upon Me, *If thou Lord, shouldst mark iniquity, O Lord, who should stand? but there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared, Psal.* 130. 4. These were good words to Me, especially the latter part thereof, to wit, that there is forgiveness with the Lord, that he might be feared; that is, as then *I* understood it, that he might be loved, and had in reverence; for it was thus made out to Me, *That the great God did set so high an esteem upon the love of his poor creatures, that rather then he would go without their love he would pardon their transgressions.*

175. And now was that word fulfilled on Me, and I was also refreshed by it, *Then shall they be ashamed and confounded, and never open their mouth any more because of their shame, when I am pacified towards thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God, Zech.* 16. 36. Thus was my Soul at this time (and as I then did think for ever) set at Liberty from being afflicted with my former guilt and amazement.

176. But before many Weeks were over, I began to despond again, fearing, lest notwithstanding all that I had enjoyed, yet *I* might be deceived and destroyed at the last: for this consideration

lideration came strong into my mind, That what ever comfort and peace I thought I might have from the Word of the Promise of Life; yet unless there could be found in my refreshment a concurrence and Agreement in the Scriptures, let Me think what I will thereof, and hold it never so fast, I should find no such thing at the end: *For the Scriptures cannot be broken*, John. 10. 35.

177. Now began my heart again to ake and fear I might meet with Disappointment at the last. Wherefore I began with all seriousness to examin my former comfort, and to consider whether one that had sinned as I had done, might with confidence trust upon the faithfulness of God laid down in those Words, by which I had been comforted, and on which I had leaned my self; but now was brought those sayings to my Mind, *For it is impossible for those who were once enlightned and have tasted the Heavenly Gift, and were made Partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the World to come; if they shall fall away to renew them again unto repentance*, Heb. 6. *For if we sin wilfully, after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remains no more sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearfull looking for of Judgement and fiery indignation, which shall devour the Adversaries*, Heb. 10. *Even as* Esau, *who for one morsel of meat sold his Birthright; for you know how that afterwards when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place of Repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears*, Heb. 12.

178. Now was the Word of the Gospel forced from

from my ſoul, ſo that no Promiſe or Encouragement was to be found in the Bible for Me; And now would that Saying work upon my Spirit to afflict Me, *Rejoyce not, O Iſrael, for joy, as other people*, Hoſ. 9. 1. For I ſaw indeed there was cauſe of rejoycing for thoſe that held to Jeſus: but as for Me I had cut my ſelf off by my tranſgreſſions, and left my ſelf neither foot-hold nor hand-hold amongſt all the ſtayes and props in the precious Word of Life.

179. And truly I did now feel my ſelf to ſink into a gulf, as an Houſe whoſe foundation is deſtroyed. I did liken my ſelf in this condition unto the caſe of ſome child that was fallen into a Milk-pit, who though it could make ſome ſhift to ſcrable and ſpraul in the water; yet becauſe it could find neither hold for hand nor foot, therefore at laſt it muſt die in that condition. So ſoon as this freſh aſſault had faſtned on my Soul, that Scripture it came into my heart, *This for many daies*, Dan. 10. 14. And indeed I found it was ſo: for *I* could not be delivered nor brought to peace again, untill well-nigh two years and an half were compleatlie finiſhed. Wherefore theſe Words, though in themſelves they tended to diſcouragement, yet to Me, who feared this condition would be eternal, they were at ſometimes as an help and refreſhment to Me.

180. For thought I, *many days* are not for ever, *many days* will have an end, therefore ſeeing I was to be afflicted not a few but *many days*, yet I was glad it was but *for many days*. Thus, I ſay, *I* could

recal my ſelf ſometimes, and give my ſelf a help; for as ſoon as ever the Words came in, at firſt I knew my trouble would be long, yet this would be but ſometimes, for I could not alwayes think on this, nor ever be helped though I did.

181. Now while theſe Scriptures lay before Me and laid ſin anew at my Door, that ſaying in the eighteenth of *Luke*, with others, did encourage Me to prayer: then the Tempter again laid at me very ſore, ſuggeſting, *That neither the Mercy of God, nor yet the Blood of Chriſt, did at all concern me, nor could they help me for my ſin*: yet, thought *I*, I will pray; but ſaid the Tempter, your ſin is unpardonable. Yet ſaid I, I will pray. So I went to prayer, to God; and while *I* was at prayer I uttered words to this effect, *Lord, Satan Tells me, that neither thy mercy, nor Chriſts Blood is ſufficient to ſave my Soul: Lord, ſhall I honour thee moſt by believing thou wilt and canſt, or by believing thou neither wilt nor canſt? Lord, I would fain honour thee by believing thou wilt and canſt.*

182. And as I was thus before the Lord; that Scripture faſtned on my heart, [*O Man great is thy Faith*] Mat. 15. 28. Even as if one had clapt Me on the back, as *I* was on my knees before God, yet I was not able to believe this till almoſt ſix months after, for I could not think that I had *Faith* or that there ſhould be a word for Me to act *Faith* on; therefore *I* ſhould ſtill be, as ſticking in the jaws of deſperation, and went mourning up and down in a ſad condition.

183. There was nothing that *I* longed for more, then

then to be put out of doubt as to this thing, and as I was vehemently desiring to know if there was hope, these words came rowling into my Mind, *will the Lord cast off for ever, and will he be favourable no more? Is his mercie clean gone for ever? Doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies,* Ps.77.7,8,9. and all the while they run in my mind, me thought I had this still as the answer: 'Tis a question whether he hath or no; It may be he hath not: something also there was upon my heart at the same time which I cannot now call to minde, which with this text did sweeten my heart, and make Me conclude that his mercie might not be quite gone, nor clean gone for ever.

184. At another time I remembred I was again much under this Question, Whether the blood of Christ was sufficient to save my Soul? In which doubt I continued from Morning till about seven or eight at night; and at last, when I was, as it were, quite worn out with fear least it should not lay hold on me, these Words did sound suddenly within me, *He is able:* but methought this Word *Able*, was spoke loud unto Me, it shewed a *great* Word, it seemed to be writ in *Great* Letters, and gave such a justle to my fear and doubt, (I mean for the time it tarried with me, which was about a day) as *I* never had from that, all my life either before or after that, *Heb.* 7. 25.

185. But one morning when I was again at prayer, and trembling under the fear of this, that no Word of God could help Me, that piece of a Sen-

Sentence darted in upon Me, *My grace is sufficient*. At this me thought I felt some stay, as if there might be hopes: But O how good a thing is it for God to send his word! for about a fortnight before, I was looking on this very place, and then I thought it could not come near my Soul with comfort and threw down my Book in a pet, I thought it was not large enough for Me; but now it was as if it had arms of Grace so wide, that it could not only incloſe Me, but many more beſides.

186. By theſe words I was ſuſtained, yet not without exceeding conflicts for the ſpace of ſeven or eight weeks: for my peace would be in it and out ſometimes twenty times a day: Comfort now, and Trouble preſently; Peace now, and before I could go a furlong, as full of Fear and Guilt as ever heart could hold; and this was not only now and then, but my whole ſeven weeks experience: for *this about the ſufficiency of Grace*; and *that* of *Eſau*'s parting with his Birth-right would be like a pair of Scales in my mind, ſometimes one end would be uppermoſt, & ſometimes again the other, according to which would be my peace or trouble.

187. Wherefore I did ſtill pray to God that he would come in with this Scripture more fully on my heart, to wit, that he would help Me to apply the whole ſentence; for as yet it only helped me thus far, *my Grace is ſufficient*; and thought it came no farther, it anſwered my former queſtion, to wit, that there was hope; yet, becauſe *for thee*, was left out, I was not contented, but prayed to God for that alſo: wherefore one day as I was in

a Meeting of Gods people full of sadness and terror, for my fears again were strong upon Me, and as I was now thinking my Soul was never the better, but my case most sad and fearful, these words did with great power suddenly break in upon Me, *My Grace is sufficient for thee, my Grace is sufficient for thee, my Grace is sufficient for thee,* three times together: and O! me thought that every Word was a mighty Word unto me; as *my,* and *Grace,* and *sufficient* and for *thee*: they were then, and sometimes are still, far bigger than others be.

188. At which time, my understanding was so enlightned, that I was as though I had seen the Lord Jesus look down from Heaven through the Tiles upon Me, and direct these words unto Me; this sent me mourning home, it broke my heart, and filled me full of joy, and laid me as the dust, only it staid not long with me, I mean in this glory and refreshing comfort, yet it continued with me for several Weeks, and did encourage Me to hope. But so soon as that powerful operation of it was taken of my heart, that other about *Esau,* returned upon me as before; so my soul did hang as in a pair of scales again, sometimes up, and sometimes down, now in peace, and anon again in terror.

189. Thus I went on for many weeks, sometimes comforted, and sometimes tormented, and especially at sometimes my torment would be very sore, for all those Scriptures fore-named in the *Hebrews* would be set before Me, as the only sentences that would keep me out of Heaven. Then

again I ſhould begin to repent, that ever that thought went thorough me; I ſhould alſo think thus with my ſelf, why, how many Scriptures are there againſt me? there is but three or four, and cannot God miſs there, and ſave me for all them? Sometimes again I ſhould think, O if it were not for theſe three or four Words, now how might I be comforted! and I could hardly forbear at ſometimes, but to wiſh them out of the Book.

190. Then me thought *I* ſhould ſee as if both *Peter*, and *Paul*, and *John*, and all the Writers did look with ſcorn upon me, and hold me in deriſion; and as if they ſaid unto me all our words are truth, one of as much force as another; it is not we that have cut you off, but you have caſt away your ſelf; there is none of our ſentences that you muſt take hold upon, but theſe, and ſuch as theſe; *It is impoſſible; there remains no more Sacrifice for Sin.* Heb. 6. *And it had been better for them not to have known the will of God, then after they have known it to turn from the Holy Commandment delivered unto them*, Heb. 10. *For the Scriptures cannot be broken*, 2 Pet. 2. 21.

191. Theſe, as the Elders of the City of Refuge, I ſaw were to be the Judges both of my caſe, and me, while I ſtood with the avenger of blood at my heels, trembling at their Gate for deliverance; alſo with a thouſand fears and miſtruſts, that they would ſhut me out for ever, *Joſh.* 20. 3.

192. Thus was *I* confounded, not knowing what to do, nor how to be ſatisfied in this Queſtion; *whether the Scriptures could agree in the Salvation of*

my

my Soul? I quaked at the Apostles; I knew their Words were true, and that they must stand for ever.

193. And *I* remember one day, as I was in diverse frames of Spirit, and considering that these frames were still according to the nature of the several Scriptures that came in upon my Mind: if this of Grace, then *I* was quiet: But if that of *Esau*, then tormented. *Lord, thought I if both these Scriptures would meet in my heart at once, I wonder which of them would get the better of me.* So Me thought, I had a longing mind that they might come both together upon me; yea I desired of God they might.

194. Well about two or three days after, so they did indeed; they bolted both upon me at a time, and did work and struggle strangely in me for a while: at last, that about *Esau*'s birth-right began to wax weak, and withdraw, and vanish; and this about the sufficiency of grace prevailed with peace and joy. And as I was in a muse about this thing, that Scripture came home upon Me, *Mercy rejoyceth against judgement*, James 2. 13.

195. This was a wonderment to Me, yet truly I am apt to think it was of God, for the Word of the Law and Wrath, must give place to the word of Life and Grace; because though the Word of Condemnation be glorious, yet the Word of Life and Salvation, doth far exceed in Glory, 2 *Cor.* 3. 8, 9, 10, 11. *Mark* 9. 5, 6, 7. *John* 6. 37. Also that *Moses* and *Elias* must both vanish, and leave Christ and his Saints alone.

196. This

196. This Scripture alſo did now moſt ſweetly viſit my Soul, *And him that cometh to me, I will in no ways caſt out.* O the comfort that I have had from this word, *in no ways*; as who ſhould ſay, by no means, for nothing, what ever he hath done. But Satan would greatly labour to pull this promiſe from Me, telling of Me, that Chriſt did not mean Me, and ſuch as *I*, but *S*inners of a lower rank, that had not done as I had done. But I ſhould anſwer him again, Satan, here is in this word no ſuch exception, but *him that comes, him, any him, him that cometh to me I will in no ways caſt out.* And this *I* well remember ſtill, that of all the ſlights that Satan uſed to take this Scripture from Me, yet he never did ſo much as put this queſtion, *But do you come aright?* And *I* have thought the reaſon was, becauſe he thought I knew full well, what coming was; for I ſaw that to come aright, was to come as I was, a vile and ungodly ſinner, and to caſt my ſelf at the feet of Mercy, condemning my ſelf for ſin; if ever Satan and I did ſtrive for any Word it was for this in *John*: he pulled, and I pulled, but God be praiſed, I got ſome ſweetneſs from it.

197. But, notwithſtanding all theſe helps and bleſſed words of Grace, yet that of *Eſau's* ſelling of his birth-right, would ſtill at times diſtreſs my Conſcience: for though I had been moſt ſweetly comforted, and that but juſt before, yet when that came into Mind, 'twould make Me fear again. I could not be quite rid thereof, 'twould every day be with Me; wherefore now I went another way to work

work, even to consider the Nature of this blasphemous thought, I mean, if I should take the words at the largest, and give them their own natural force and scope, even every word therein: So when *I* had thus considered, I found that if they were fairly taken, they would amount to this, that I had freely left the Lord Jesus Christ to his choise, whether he would be my Saviour or no, for the the wicked words were these, *Let him go if he will.* Then that Scripture gave Me hope, *I will never leave thee nor forsake thee*, Heb. 13. 5. O Lord, said I, but *I* have left thee; then it answered again, *But I will not leave thee.* For this *I* thank God also.

198. Yet I was grievous afraid he should, and found it exceeding hard to trust him, seeing *I* had so offended him: I could have been exceeding glad that this thought had never befallen, for then I thought I could with more ease and freedom abundance have leaned upon his Grace: I see it was with Me as it was with *Joseph's* Brethren, the guilt of their own wickedness did often fill them with fears, that their Brother would at last despise them, *Gen.* 50. 15. 16, 17, 18.

199. But above all the Scriptures that I yet did meet with, that in the twentieth of *Joshuah*, was the greatest comfort to Me, which speaks of the slayer that was to flie for refuge. *And if the Avenger of Blood pursue the Slayer, then*, saith Moses, *they that are the Elders of the City of Refuge, shall not deliver him into his hand; because he smote his Neighbour unwittingly, and hated him not afore-*

time

time. O blessed be God for this word! I was convinced that I was the Slayer; and that the Avenger of Blood pursued Me. I felt with greater terror; onely now it remained that I enquire, Whether I have right to enter the City of Refuge? So I found, That he must not, *who lay in Wait to shed Blood*; but he who *unwittingly*, or that did *unawares shed Blood*, even he who did not *hate his Neighbour before.* Wherefore:

200. I thought verily I was the man that must enter, for because I had smitten my Neighbor *unwittingly, and hated him not afore-time.* I hated him not afore-time, no I prayed unto him, was tender of sinning against him; yea and against this wicked temptation, I had strove for a twelve month before, yea, and also when it did pass thorow my heart, it did in spight of my teeth: Wherefore I thought I had right to enter this City, and the Elders, which are the Apostles, were not to deliver Me up. This therefore was great comfort to Me, and did give Me much ground of hope.

201. Yet being very critical, for my smart had made Me that I knew not what ground was sure enough to bear Me, I had one question that my Soul did much desire to be resolved about; and that was, *Whether it be possible for any Soul that hath indeed sinned the unpardonable sin, yet after that to receive, though but the least true spiritual comfort from God through Christ?* The which after I had much considered I found the answer was, No, they could not: and that for these Reasons:

203. First, Because those that have sinned that sin,

sin, they are debarred a share in the Blood of Christ, and being shut out of that, they must needs be void of the least ground of hope, & of so spiritual comfort, *for to such there remains no more sacrifice for sin*, Heb. 10. 26, 27. Secondly, Because they are denyed a share in the Promise of Life: they shall never be forgiven, neither in this world, nor in that which is to come, *Matth.* 12. 31. Thirdlie, the Son of God excludes them also from a share in his blessed Intercession, being for ever ashamed to own them both before his holy Father, and the blessed Angels in Heaven, *Mark* 8.

204. When I had with much deliberation considered of this matter, and could not but conclude that the Lord had comforted Me, and that too after this my wicked sin: then methought I durst venture to come nigh unto those most fearful and terrible Scriptures, with which all this while I had been so greatly affrighted, and on which indeed before I durst scarce cast mine eye, (yea had much ado an hundred times to forbear wishing of them out of the Bible, for I thought they would destroy Me) but now, I say, I began to take some measure of incouragement, to come close to them to read them, and consider them, and to weigh their Scope and tendency.

205. The which when I began to do, I found their visage changed; for they looked not so grimly as before *I* thought they did: And first I came to the sixth of the *Hebrews*, yet trembling for fear it should strike Me; which when *I* had considered, I found that the falling there intended, was a falling

falling *quite away*, that is, as I conceived, a falling from, and an absolute denying of the Gospel, of remission of sins by Christ, for, from them the Apostle begins his argument *verſ.* 1. 2, 3. Secondly, I found that this falling away must be openly, even in the view of the World, even so as *to put Christ to an open shame*. Thirdly, I found that those he there intendeth, were for ever shut up of God both in blindness, hardness, and impenitency: *It is impossible they should be renewed again unto repentance*. By all these particulars, I found, to Gods everlasting praise, my sin was not the sin in this place intended.

206. Then *I* considered that in the tenth of the *Hebrews*, and found that the *wilful sin* there mentioned, is not every wilful sin, but that sin which doth throw off Christ, and then his commandments too. Secondly, that must also be done openly, before two or three witnesses, to answer that of the Law, *verſ.* 28. Thirdly, this sin cannot be committed but with great Despite done to the Spirit of Grace; despising both the disswasions from that sin, and the perswasions to the contrary: But the Lord knows, though this my sin was deviliſh, yet it did not amount to these.

207. And as touching that in the twelfth of the *Hebrews*, about *Esaus* selling his Birth-right, though this was that which killed Me, and stood like a spear against Me; yet now I did consider, First, That his was not a hasty thought against the continual labour of his mind; but a thought consented to, and put in practice likewise, and that too

after

after some deliberation: *Gen.* 25. Secondly, It was a publick and open action, even before his Brother, if not before many more; this made his sin of a far more hainous nature then otherwise it would have been. Thirdly, He continued to slight his Birth-right: *He did eat and drink and went his way*; *thus* Esau *DESPISED his Birth-right*: yea, twenty years after he was found to despise it still, And Esau *said*, *I have enough*, *my Brother*, *keep that thou hast to thy self*, Gen. 33. 9.

208. Now as touching this, *That* Esau *sought a place of repentance*: Thus I thought: first, this was not for the *Birth-right*: but *the Blessing*; this is clear from the Apostle, and is distinguished by Esau himself, *he hath taken away my birth-right*, (that is formerly) *and now he hath taken away my Blessing also*, Gen. 27. 36. Secondly, Now this being thus considered, I came again to the Apostle, to see what might be the mind of God in a new-Testament stile and sense concerning *Esau*'s sin; and so far as I could conceive this was the mind of God, *That the Birth-right* signified *Regeneration*, and the *Blessing* the *Eternal Inheritance*; for so the Apostle seems to hint, *Lest there be any profane Person*, *as Esau*, *who for one morsel of meat sold his Birth-right*; as if he should say, lest there be any Person among you that shall off all those blessed beginnings of God that at present are upon him, in order to a new birth, lest they become as *Esau*, even be rejected *afterwards*, when they would inherit the Blessing.

209. For many there are, who in the day of

Grace and Mercy despise those things which are indeed the birth-right to Heaven, who yet when the deciding day appears, will cry as loud as *Esau*, *Lord, Lord open to us*, but then *as Isaac* would not repent, no more will God the Father, but will say, I *have blessed these, yea, and they shall be blessed*, but as for you; *Depart, you are workers of iniquity*, Gen. 27. 32. Luke 13. 25, 26, 27.

210. When I had thus considered these Scriptures, and found that thus to understand them; was not against, but according to other Scriptures; this still added further to my encouragement and comfort, and also gave a great Blow to that Objection, to wit, *That the Scriptures could not agree in the Salvation of my Soul.* And now remained only the hinder part of the Tempest, for the thunder was gone beyond me, onely some drops did still remain, that now and then would fall upon Me: but because my former frights and anguish were very sore and deep, therefore it did oft befall me still, as it befalleth those that have been scared with fire, I thought every voice was *fire, fire*; every little touch would hurt my tender Conscience.

211. But one day, as I was passing in the field, and that too with some dashes on my Conscience, fearing lest yet all was not right, suddenly this sentence fell upon my Soul, *Thy righteousness is in Heaven*; and methought withall, I saw with the eyes of my Soul, Jesus Christ at Gods right-hand, there, I say, was my righteousness; so that where ever *I* was, or what-ever I was a doing, God could not say of me, *He wants my Righteousness*, for that was

was just before him. I also saw moreover, that it was not my good frame of heart that made my Righteousness better, nor yet my bad frame that made my Righteousness worse: for my Righteousness was Jesus Christ himself, *the same yesterday, to day, and for ever.* Heb. 13. 8.

212. Now did my chains fall off my Legs indeed' I was loosed from my afflictions and irons, my temptations also fled away: so that from that time those dreadful Scriptures of God left off to trouble Me; now went *I* also home rejoycing, for the Grace and Love of God; So when I came home, I looked to see if I could find that Sentence, *Thy Righteousness is in Heaven:* but could not find such a saying, wherefore my heart began to sink again, only that was brought to my remembrance, 1 *Cor.* 33. *He is made unto us of God, Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption*; by this word I saw the other Sentence true.

213. For by this Scripture, I saw the Man Christ Jesus, as he is distinct from us, as touching his bodily presence, so he is our Righteousness and Sanctification before God, here therefore I lived, for some time, very sweetly at peace with God thorough Christ; O Me thought Christ! Christ! there was nothing but Christ that was before my eyes: *I* was not now only for looking upon this and the other benefit of Christ a part, as of his Blood, Burial, or Resurrection, but considered him as whole Christ; as he in whom all these, and all his other Vertues, Relations, Offices and Operations met together, and that on the right hand of God in Heaven.

214. 'Twas glorious to Me to ſee his exaltation, and the worth and prevalency of all his benefits, and that becauſe of this; Now *I* could look from my ſelf to him, and ſhould reckon, that all thoſe Graces of God that now were green on Me, were yet but like thoſe crackt-groats, and four-pence-half-pennies that rich men carry in their Purſes, when their Gold is in their Trunks at home: O, I ſaw my Gold was in my Trunk at home! in Chriſt my Lord and Saviour! Now Chriſt was all; all my Wiſdom, all my Righteouſneſs, all my Sanctification, and all my Redemption.

215. Further, The Lord did alſo lead Me into the myſtery of Union with his Son of God, that *I* was joyned to him, that *I* was fleſh of his fleſh, and bone of his bone, and now was that a ſweet word to Me, in *Epheſ.* 5. 30. By this alſo was my Faith in him, as my Righteouſneſs, the more confirmed to Me; for if he and *I* were one, then his Righteouſneſs was mine, his Merits mine, his Victory alſo mine. Now could *I* ſee my ſelf in Heaven and Earth at once; in Heaven by my Chriſt, by my Head, by my Righteouſneſs and Life, though on Earth by my Body or Perſon.

216. Now *I* ſaw Chriſt Jeſus was looked on of God, and ſhould alſo be looked upon by us as that common or publick perſon, inwhom all the whole body of his Elect are always to be conſidered and reckoned, ſ we fulfilled ſ Law by him, died by him, roſe from ſ dead by him, got ſ victory over Sin, Death, ſ Devil, and Hell by him: when he died, we died, and ſo of his reſurrection: *Thy dead men*

ſhall

ſhall live together with my dead body ſhall they ariſe, ſaith he, Iſa. 26. And again, *After two days he will revive us, and the third day we ſhall live in his ſight*, Hoſea 6. 2. Which is now fulfilled by the ſitting down of the Son of Man on the right hand of the Majeſty in the Heavens; according to that to the *Epheſians, he hath raiſed us up together, and made us ſit together in heavenly places in Chriſt Jeſus*, Epheſ. 2. 6.

217. Ah theſe bleſſed conſiderations and Scriptures, with many other of the like nature, were in thoſe days made to ſpangle in mine eyes; *Praiſe ye the Lord God in his Sanctuary, praiſe him in the firmament of his power, praiſe him for his mighty acts, praiſe him according to his excellent greatneſs*, Pſal. 150. 1, 2.

218. Having thus in few words given you a taſte of the Sorrow and Affliction that my Soul went under, by the guilt and terror that this my wicked thought did lay me under; and having given you alſo a touch of my Deliverance there from; and of the ſweet and bleſſed comfort that I met with afterwards, (which comfort dwelt about a twelve month with my heart, to my unſpeakable admiration) I will now (God willing) before I proceed any further, give you in a word or two, What as I conceive, was the cauſe of this temptation; and alſo after that, what advantage at the laſt it became unto my Soul.

219. For 2 cauſes, I conceived they were principally two; of which two alſo *I* was deply convinced all the time this trouble lay upon Me. The firſt was,

For that I did not, when I was delivered from the temptation that went before, ſtill pray to God to keep Me from temptations that were to come: for though, as I can ſay in truth, my Soul was much in prayer before this tryal ſeized Me. Yet then I prayed only, or at the moſt principally, for the removal of preſent troubles, and for freſh diſcoveries of love in Chriſt: which I ſaw afterwards was not enough to do; I alſo ſhould have prayed that the great God would keep Me from the evil that was to come.

220. Of this I was made deeply ſenſible by the prayer of holie *David*, who when he was under preſent Mercy, yet prayed that God would hold him back from ſin and temptation to come: *For then*, ſaith he, *ſhal I be upright, and I ſhall be innocent from the great Tranſgreſſion*, Pſal. 19. 13. By this very Word was *I* gauled and condemned, quite thorow this long temptation.

221. That alſo was another Word that did much condemn me for my folly, in the neglect of this duty, Heb. 4. 16. *Let us therefore come boldly to the Throne of Grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find Grace to help in time of need*; This I had not done, and therefore was thus ſuffered to ſin and fall, according to what is written, *Pray that you enter not into temptation*: and truly this very thing is to this day of ſuch weight and awe upon Me, that I dare not, when *I* come before the Lord, go off my knees untill I intreat him for help and mercy againſt the temptations that are to come; and I do beſeech thee, Reader, that thou learn to be-

ware

beware of my negligence by the afflictions that for this thing I did for days, and months, and years, with sorrow undergoe.

222. Another cause of this temptation was, That I had tempted God; and on this manner did I do it: Upon a time my Wife was great with Child, and before her full time was come, her pangs as of a Woman in Travel, were fierce and strong upon her, even as if she would immediatly have fallen in Labor, and been delivered of an untimely Birth: Now at this very time it was that I had been so strongly tempted to question the being of God; wherefore as my Wife lay crying by Me, I said, but with all secrecy imaginable even thinking in my heart, *Lord, if thou wilt now remove this sad affliction from my Wife, and cause that she be no more troubled therewith this night*, (and now were her pangs just upon her) *then I shall know that thou canst discern the most secret thought of the heart.*

223. I had no sooner said it in my heart, but her pangs were taken from her, and she was cast into a deep sleep, and so she continued till morning, at this I greatly marvelled, not knowing what to think, but after *I* had been awake a good while and heard her cry no more, I fell to sleep also: So when I waked in the morning, it came upon Me again, even what *I* had said in my heart the last night, and how the Lord had shewed me that he knew my secret thoughts, which was a great astonishment unto Me for several weeks after.

224. Well, about a year and an half afterwards that wicked sinful thought, of which I have spoken

before, went thorow my wicked heart, even this thought, *Let Christ go if he will*; so when *I* was fallen under guilt for this, the remembrance of my other thought, and of the effect thereof, would also come upon Me with this retort, which also carried rebuke along with it; *Now you may see that God doth know the most secret thoughts of the heart. Now you may see that God doth know the most secret thoughts of the heart.*

225. And with this, that of the passages that were betwixt the Lord, and his servant *Gideon*, fell upon my spirit; how because that *Gideon* tempted God with his Fleece both wet and dry, when he should have believed and ventured upon his word, therefore the Lord did afterwards so try him, as to send him against an innumerable companie of Enemies, and that too as to outward appearance, without any strengh or help, *Judg.* 6. 7. Thus he served Me, and that justly, for I should have believed his Word, and not have put an if upon the all-seeingness of God.

226. And now to shew you something of the advantages that I also have gained by this temptation. And first, by this I was made continually to possess in my Soul a very wonderful sense both of the being and glory of God, and of his beloved Son: in the temptation before my soul was perplexed with Atheism, but now the case was otherwise, now was God and Christ continually before my face, though not in a way of comfort, but in a way of exceeding dread and terror. The glory of the holiness of God did at this time break Me

to

to pieces, and the bowels and compassion of Christ did break Me as on the Wheel; for I could not consider him but as a lost and rejected Christ, the remembrance of which, was as the continual breaking of my bones.

227. The Scriptures also were wonderful things unto Me; I saw that the truth and verity of them, were the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven; *those* the Scriptures favour, *they* must inherit bliss; but *those* they oppose and condemn, *must* perish for evermore: O this word, *For the Scriptures cannot be broken*, would rend the Caul of my heart? and so would that other, *Whose sins ye remit, they are remitted; but whose sins ye retain, they are retained:* Now I saw the Apostles to be the Elders of the City of Refuge, *Josh.*20.4. those that they were to receive in, were received to Life; but those they shut out, were to be slain by the avenger of blood.

228. Oh! one sentence of the Scripure did more afflict and terrifie my mind, I mean those sentences that stood against Me (as sometimes I thought they every one did) more, I say, than an Army of forty thousand men that might have come against Me. Wo be to him against whom the Scriptures bend themselves.

229. By this temptation I was made see more into the Nature of the Promises, than ever I was before: for I lying now trembing under the mighty hand of God, continually torn and rent by the thundering of his Justice; this made Me with careful heart, and watchful eye, with great fearfulness, to turn over every leaf, and with much diligence

mixt

mixt with trembling, to consider everie sentence, together with its natural force and fortitude.

230. By this temptation also, *I* was greatlie holden off my former foolish practice, of putting by the VVord of Promise when it came into my mind: for now, though I could not suck that comfort and sweetness from the Promise, as I had done at other times, yet, like to a man asinking, I should catch at all I saw: formerly I thought I might not meddle with the Promise, unless I felt its comfort; but now 'twas no time thus to do, the avenger of blood too hardly did pursue Me.

231. Now therefore I was glad to catch at that word, which yet I feared I had no ground nor right to own, and even to leap into the bosom of that Promise, that yet I fear'd did shut its heart against Me. Now also I should labour to take the Word as God hath laid it down, without restraining the natural force of one syllable thereof: O what did I now see in that blessed sixth of *John*, *And him that comes to me, I will in no wise cast out!* *John* 6 37. Now I began to consider ẇ my self, that God had a bigger mouth to speak with, than I had a heart to conceive with; I thought also with my self that he spake not his words in haste, or in an unadvised heat, but with infinite Wisdom and Judgement, and in a very truth and faithfulness, 2 *Sam.* 3. 28.

232. I should in these dayes, often in my greatest agonies, even flounce towards the Promise (as the Horses do towards sound ground, that yet stick in the mire) concluding, (though as one almost bereft

bereft of his wits through fear) on this I will rest and stay, and leave the fulfilling of it to the God of Heaven that made it. O! many a pull hath my heart had with Satan, for that blessed 6th of *John*: I did not now, as at other times, look principally for comfort, (though, O how welcome would it have been unto Me!) But now a word, a word to lean a weary Soul upon, that I might not sink for ever.

233. Yea, often when I have been making to the promise, I have seen as if the Lord would refuse my Soul for ever; *I* was often as if I had run upon the pikes, and as if the Lord had thrust at Me, to keep me from him, as with a flaming sword. Then I should think of *Esther*, who went to petition the King contrary to the Law, *Esth.* 4. 16. I thought also of *Benhadad*'s Servants, who went with ropes upon their Heads to their Enemies for mercy, 1 *Kings* 20. 31. *&c.* The Woman of *Canaan* also, that would not be daunted, though called Dog by Christ, *Mat.* 15. 22. *&c.* and the Man that went to borrow bread at midnight, *Luke* 1. 5, 6, 7, 1. *&c* Were great encouragements unto Me.

234. *I* never saw those Heights and Depths in Grace, and Love, and Mercy, as I saw after this temptation: great sins do draw out great Grace; and where guilt is most terrible and fierce, there the mercy of God in Christ, when shewed to the Soul, appears most high and mighty; When *Job* had passed through his captivity, *he had twice as much as he had before*, Job 42. 10. Blessed be God for

for Jesus Christ our Lord. Many other things I might here make observation of, but I would be brief, and therefore shall at this time omit them; and do pray God that my harms may make others fear to offend, lest they also be made to bear the iron yoak as *I* did.

I had two or three times, at or about my deliverance from this temptation, such strange apprehensions of the Grace of God, that I could hardly bear up under it; it was so out of measure amazing, when I thought it could reach Me, that I do think, if that sense of it had abode long upon Me, it would have made me uncapable for business.

235. Now *I* shall go forward to give you a relation of other of the Lords dealings with me, of his dealings with me at other sundry seasons, and of the temptations I then did meet withal. I shall begin with what I met with when I first did joyn in fellowship with the people of God in *Bedford*. After *I* had propounded to the Church, that my desire was to walk in the Order and Ordinances of Christ with them, and was also admitted by them, while I thought of that blessed Ordinance of Christ, which was his last Supper with his Disciples before his death, that Scripture, *Do this in remembrance of me*, Luke 22. 19. was made a very precious word unto Me; for by it the Lord did come down upon my Conscience with the discovery of his death for my sins, and as *I* then felt, did as if he plunged me in the vertue of the same. But behold, *I* had not been long a partaker at that Ordinance, but such

such fierce and sad temptations did attend me at all times therein, both to blaspheme the Ordinance, and to wish some deadly thing to those that then did eat thereof: that lest I should at any time be guilty of consenting to these wicked and fearfull thoughts, I was forced to bend my self, all the while, to pray to God to keep Me from such blasphemies: and also to cry to God to bless the Bread and Cup to them, as it went from mouth to mouth. The reason of this temptation I have thought since, was, because I did not with that reverence as became Me at first, approach to partake thereof.

236. Thus I continued for three quarters of a Year, and could never have rest nor ease; but at last the Lord came in upon my soul with that same Scripture, by which my soul was visited before: and after that, I have been usually very well and comfortable in the partaking of that blessed Ordinance, and have, I trust, therein discerned the *Lords Body* as broken for my sins, and that his precious Blood hath been shed for my transgressions.

237. Upon a time I was somewhat inclining to a Consumption, wherewith about the Spring, I was suddenlie and violentlie seized, with much weakness in my outward man; insomuch that I thought I could not live. Now began I afresh to give my self up to a serious examination after my state and condition for the future, and of my evidences for that blessed VVorld to come. For it hath, I bless the Name of God, been my usuall course, as alwayes, so especiallie in the day of affliction, to endeavour to keep my interest in

Life to come, clear before mine eye.

238. But I had no ſooner begun to recall to mind my former experience, of the goodneſs of God to my ſoul, but there came flocking into my mind, an innumerable company of my ſins and tranſgreſſions, amongſt which theſe were at this time moſt to my affliction, namely, my deadneſs, dulneſs, and coldneſs in holy Duties; my wandrings of heart, my weariſomneſs in all good things, my want of love to God, his wayes and People, with this at the end of all, *Are theſe the fruits of Chriſtianity? Are theſe the tokens of a bleſſed man?*

239. At the apprehenſion of theſe things, my ſickneſs was doubled upon Me, for now was I ſick in my inward man, my ſoul was clog'd with guilt; now alſo was all my former experience of God's goodneſs to Me, quite taken out of my mind, and hid as if it had never been, nor ſeen: Now was my ſoul greatly pinched between theſe two conſiderations, *Live I muſt not, Die I dare not:* Now I ſunk and fell in my ſpirit, and was giving up all for loſt; but as I was walking up and down in the houſe as a man in a moſt woful ſtate, that Word of God took hold of my heart, *Ye are juſtified freely by his Grace, through the redemption that is in Chriſt Jeſus*, Rom. 3. 24. But oh what a turn it made upon Me.

240. Now was *I* as one awaked out of ſome troubleſome ſleep and dream, and liſtning to this Heavenly ſentence, I was as if I heard it thus expounded to Me; *Sinner, thou thinkeſt that becauſe of thy ſins and infirmities, I cannot ſave thy ſoul; but behold,*

hold, my Son is by me, and upon him I look, and not on thee, and will deal with thee according as I am pleased with him. At this I was greatly lightned in my mind, and made to understand that God could justifie a sinner at any time, it was but looking upon Christ, and imputing of his benefits to us, and the work was forthwith done.

241. And as I was thus in a muse, that Scripture came with great power upon my Spirit, *Not by Works of righteousness that we have done, but according to his mercy he hath saved us,* &c. 2 *Tim.* 1. 9. *Tit.* 3. 5. Now was I got on high, I saw my self within the arms of Grace and Mercy; and though *I* was before afraid to think of a dying hour, yet now I cryed, *Let me die*: Now Death was lovely and beautiful in my sight, for I saw *we shall never live indeed till we be gone to the other world.* O, me thought this life is but a slumber, in comparison of that above; at this time also I saw more in those words, *Heirs of God,* (*Rom.* 8. 17.) Then ever I shall be able to express while I live in this world, *Heirs of God!* God himself is the portion of his Saints. This I saw and wondred at, but cannot tell you what I saw.

242. Again, as I was at another time very ill and weak, and all that time also the Tempter did beset me strongly, (for I find he is much for assaulting the soul, when it begins to approach towards the grave, then is his opportunity) labouring to hide from me my former Experience of Gods goodness: Also setting before me the terrors of Death, and of Judgment of God; insomuch, that

at this time, through my fear of miſcarrying for ever (ſhould I now die) *I* was once dead before Death came, and did as if I had felt my ſelf already deſcending into the pit; me thought, I ſaid, there was no way but to hell *I* muſt: but behold, juſt as I was in the midſt of thoſe fears, theſe words of the Angels carrying *Lazarus* into *Abrahams* boſom, darted in upon me, as who ſhould ſay, *So it ſhall be with thee when thou doeſt leave this World.* This did ſweetly revive my ſpirit, and help me to hope in God; Which when *I* had with comfort muſed on a while, that word fell with great weight upon my mind, *O Death, where is thy ſting? O Grave, where is thy victory?* 1 Cor. 15. 55. At this I became both well in body and mind at once, for both my ſickneſs did preſently vaniſh, and I walked comfortably in my Work for God again.

243. At another time, though juſt before I was pretty well and ſavoury in my ſpirit, yet ſuddenly there fell upon me a great cloud of darkneſs, which did ſo hide from me the things of God and Chriſt, that I was as if *I* had never ſeen or known them in my Life; I was alſo ſo overrun in my Soul with a ſenſeleſs heartleſs frame of ſpirit, that I could not feel my ſoul to move or ſtir after Grace and Life by Chriſt; *I* was as if my loyns were broken, or as if my hands and feet had been tyed or bound with Chains. At this time alſo I felt ſome weakneſs to ſeize upon my outward man, which made ſtill the other affliction the more heavy and uncomfortable.

244. After *I* had been in this condition ſome three

three or four dayes, as *I* was sitting by the fire, I suddenly felt this word to sound in my heart, *I must go to Jesus*; at this my fomer darkness and Atheism fled away, and the blessed things of Heaven were set within my view; While I was on this sudden thus overtaken with surprize; Wife, said I, is there ever such a Scripture, *I must go to Jesus*? she said she could not tell? therefore I sat musing still to see if I could remember such a place; I had not sat above two or three minutes, but that came bolting in upon me, *And to an innumerable company of Angels*; and withal, *Hebrews* the twelfth about the Mount *Sion* was set before mine eyes, *Heb.* 12. 22, 23, 24.

245. Then with joy I told my Wife, *O now I know, I know!* but that night was a good night to Me, I never had but few better; I longed for the company of some of God's people, that *I* might have imparted unto them what God had shewed Me: Christ was a precious Christ to my Soul that night, I could scarce ly in my Bed for joy, and peace, and triumph, through Christ; this great Glory did not continue upon Me until Morning, yet the twelfth of the Author to the *Hebrews*, Heb. 12.21,22,23. was a blessed Scripture to Me for many days together after this.

246. The words are these, *You are come to mount Sion, to the City of the living God, to the Heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of Angels, to the general Assembly and Church of the first-born which are written in Heaven, to God the Judge of all, and to the Spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus*

the Mediator of the new Teſtament, and to the blood of ſprinkling, that ſpeaketh better things then that of Abel. Throw this bleſſed Sentence, the Lord led me over and over, firſt to his Word, and then to that, and ſhewed me wonderful Glory in every one of them. Theſe words alſo have oft ſince this time been great refreſhment to my Spirit. Bleſſed be God for having mercy on Me.

A brief account of the Authors Call to the Work of the Minſtry.

247. AND now I am ſpeaking my Experience, I will in this place thruſt in a word or two concerning my Preaching the Word, and of God's dealing with Me in that particular alſo: For after I had been about five or ſix years awakened, and helped to ſee both the want and worth of Jeſus Chriſt our Lord, and inabled to venture my Soul upon him: ſome of the moſt able among the Saints with us, I ſay the moſt able for Judgement, and holineſs of life, as they conceived, did perceive that God had counted Me worthy to underſtand ſomething of his will in his holy and bleſſed word, and had given Me utterance in ſome meaſure to expreſs what *I* ſaw, to others for edification; they deſired Me, and that with much earneſtneſs, that *I* would be willing at ſometimes to take in hand, in one of the Meetings, to ſpeak a word of Exhortation unto them.

248. The which, though at the firſt it did much daſh

dash and abash my Spirit, yet being still by them desired and intreated, I consented to their request, and did twice, at two several Assemblies, (but in private) though with much weakness and infirmity, discover my Gift amongst them: at which they not only seemed to be, but did solemnly protest, as in the sight of the great God, they were both affected and comforted, and gave thanks to the Father of mercies for the grace bestowed on Me.

249. After this, sometimes when some of them did go into the Countrey to teach, they would also that *I* should go with them; Where, though as yet I did not, nor durst not, make use of my Gift in an open way, yet more privately still, as *I* came amongst the good People in those places, I did sometimes speak a Word of admonition unto them also: the which they, as the other, received with rejoycing at the Mercie of God to Me-ward, professing their Souls were edified thereby.

250. Wherefore, to be brief, at last, being still desired by the Church, after some solemn Prayer to the Lord, with fasting, I was more particularly called forth, and appointed to a more ordinary and publick preaching the Word, not only to and amongst them that believed, but also to offer the Gospel to those that had not yet received the Faith thereof: About which time I did evidently find in my Mind a secret pricking forward thereto: Though, I bless God, not for desire of vain glory, for at that time *I* was most sorely

sorely afflicted with the fiery darts of the Devil, concerning my eternal state.

251. But yet could not be content, unless I was found in the exercise of my Gift, unto which also I was greatly animated, not only by the continual desires of the Godly, but also by that saying of *Paul* to ℣ *Corinthians*, *I beseech you, brethren (ye know the household of* Stephanas, *that it is the first fruits of* Achaia, *and that they have addicted themselves to the Ministry of the Saints) that you submit your selves unto such, and to every one that helpeth with us and laboureth,* 1 Cor. 16. 15. 16.

252. By this text I was made to see that the Holy Ghost never intended that Men who have Gifts and Abilities, should bury them in the earth, but rather did command and stir up such to the exercise of their Gift, and also did commend those that were apt and ready so to do, *They have addicted themselves to the Ministry of the Saints*: This Scripture in these days did continuallie run in my Mind to incourage Me, and strengthen Me in this my work for God; I have been also incouraged from several other Scriptures and examples of the Godly, both specified in the Word, and other ancient histories, *Acts* 8. 4. *&* 18. 24. 25. *&c.* 1 *Pet.* 4. 10. *Rom.* 12. 6. Fox *Acts & Mon.*

253. Wherefore, though of my self, of all the Saints the most unworthy, yet I, but with great fear and trembling at the sight of my own weakness, did set upon the work, and did according to my Gift, and the proportion of my Faith, preach

Preach that Bleſſed Goſpel that God had ſhewed Me in the Holy Word of Truth: Which when the Countrey underſtood, they came in to hear the Word by hundreds, and that from all parts, though upon ſundry and divers accounts.

254. And I thank GOD, he gave unto Me ſome meaſure of bowels and pity for their ſouls, which alſo did put Me forward to labour with great diligence and earneſtneſs to find out ſuch a Word as might, if God would bleſs, lay hold of and awaken the conſcience; in which alſo the good LORD had reſpect to the deſire of his Servant: for I had not Preached long, before ſome began to be touched and to be greatlie afflicted in their minds at the apprehenſion of the greatneſs of their ſin, and of their need of Jeſus Chriſt.

255. But I at firſt could not believe that God ſhould ſpeak by Me to the heart of any man, ſtill counting my ſelf unworthy, yet thoſe who thus were touched, would love Me and have a peculiar reſpect for Me; and though *I* did put it from Me that they ſhould be awakened by Me, ſtill they would confeſs it, and affirm it before the Saints of God; they would alſo bleſs God for Me (unworthy Wretch that I am!) and count Me God's Inſtrument that ſhewed to them the Way of Salvation.

256. Wherefore ſeeing them in both their words and deeds to be ſo conſtant, and alſo in their hearts ſo earneſtly preſſing after the knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt, rejoycing that ever God did

did send Me where they were: then I began to conclude it might be so, that God had owned in his Work such a foolish one as I; and then came that Word of God to my heart with much sweet refreshment, *The blessing of them that were ready to perish is come upon Me; yea, I caused the widows heart to sing for joy*, Job 29. 13.

257. At this therefore *I* rejoyced, yea, the tears of those whom God did awaken by my Preaching, would be both solace and encouragement to Me; for I thought on those Sayings, *Who is he that maketh Me glad, but the same that is made sorry by Me?* 2 Cor. 2. 2. And again, *Though I be not an Apostle to others, yet doubtless I am unto you, for the Seal of my Apostleship are ye in the LORD*, 1 Cor. 9. 2. These things therefore was as another Argument unto Me that God had called Me to, and stood by Me in this Work.

258. In my Preaching of the Word, I took special notice of this one thing, namely, That the Lord did lead Me to begin where his Word begins with sinners, that is, to condemn all flesh, and to open and alledge that the curse of God by the Law doth belong to, and lay hold on all men as they come into the World, because of sin. Now this part of my Work I fulfilled with great sense, for the terrors of the Law and guilt for my transgressions, lay heavy on my Conscience. I Preached what I felt, what I smartingly did feel; even that under which my poor soul did groan and tremble to astonishment.

259. Indeed

259. Indeed I have been as one ſent to them from the dead; *I* went my ſelf in chains to preach to them in Chains, and carried that fire in my own Conſcience, that *I* perſwaded them to beware of. *I* can truly ſay, and that without diſſembling, that when I have been to Preach, I have gone full of guilt and terrour even to the Pulpit-door, and there it hath been taken off, and I have been at liberty in my mind until I have done my Work; and then immediately, even before I could get down the Pulpit-ſtairs, have been as bad as I was before. Yet God carried Me on, but ſurely with a ſtrong hand; for neither Guilt nor Hell could take Me off my work.

260. Thus I went for the ſpace of two years, crying out againſt mens ſins, and their fearfull ſtate becauſe of them. After which, the Lord came in upon my own ſoul with ſome ſtaid peace and comfort thorow Chriſt; for he did give Me manie ſweet diſcoveries of his Bleſſed Grace thorow him: Wherefore now I altered in my Preaching, (for ſtill I Preached what I ſaw and felt) now therefore I did much labour to hold forth Jeſus Chriſt in all his Offices, Relations and Benefits unto the World, and did ſtrive alſo to diſcover, to condemn and remove thoſe falſe ſupports and props on which the World doth both lean, and by them fall and periſh. On theſe things alſo I ſtaid as long as on the other.

261. After this, God led Me into ſome thing of the *My*ſtery of union with Chriſt; wherefore that

that *I* discovered and shewed to them also. And when I had travelled thorow these three chief points of the word of God, about the space of five years or more; *I* was caught in my present practice, and cast into prison, where *I* have lain above as long again to confirm the truth by way of suffering, as *I* was before in testifying of it, according to the Scriptures, in a way of Preaching.

262. When I have been in preaching, *I* thank God my heart hath often, all the time of this and the other exercise, with great earnestness cryed to God that he would make the Word effectual to the Salvation of the soul: still being grieved lest the Enemy should take the word away from the Conscience, and so it should become unfruitful: Wherefore *I* should labour so to speak the Word, as that thereby (if it were possible) the sin and person guilty might be particularized by it.

263. Also when *I* have done the Exercise, it hath gone to my heart to think the Word should now fall as rain on stony places: still wishing from my heart, O that they who have heard Me speak this day, did but see as I do, what Sin, Death, Hell, and the curse of God is: and also what the Grace, and Love, and Mercy of God is, throw Christ, to Men in such a case as they are, who are yet estranged from him; and indeed, I did often say in my heart before the Lord, *That if to be hanged up presently before their eyes, would be a means to awaken them, and con-*

firm

firm them in the Truth, I gladly ſhould be contented.

264. For I have been in my Preaching, eſpecially when I have been engaged in the Doctrine of Life by Chriſt, without Works, as if an Angel of God had ſtood by at my back to encourage Me: O, it hath been with ſuch power and heavenly evidence upon my own Soul, while I have been labouring to unfold it, to demonſtrate it, and to faſten it upon the Conſcience of others, that I could not be contented with ſaying, *I believe and am ſure; methought I was more than ſure* (if it be lawful ſo to expreſs my ſelf) that thoſe things which then I aſſerted, were true.

265. When I went firſt to Preach the word abroad, the Doctors and Prieſts of the Country did open wide againſt Me; but *I* was perſwaded of this, not to render rayling for rayling, but to ſee how many of their carnal Profeſſors I could convince of their miſerable ſtate by the Law, and of the want and worth of Chriſt: for, thought I, *This ſhall anſwer for me in time to come, when they ſhall be for my hire before their face* Gen. 30. 33.

266. I never cared to meddle with things that were controverted, and in diſpute amongſt the Saints, eſpecially things of the loweſt nature; yet it pleaſed Me much to contend with great earneſtneſs for the Word of Faith, and the Remiſſion of Sins by the Death and Sufferings of Jeſus: but I ſay, as to other things, I ſhould let them alone, becauſe I ſaw they engendered ſtrife, and becauſe that they neither in doing,

nor in leaving undone, did commend us to God to be his: Besides, I saw my Work before Me did run in another Channel, even to carry an awakening-Word; to that therefore did I stick and adhere.

267. I never endeavoured to, nor durst make use of other mens lines, *Rom.* 15. 18. (though I condemn not all that do) for I verily thought, and found by experience, that what was taught Me by the Word and Spirit of Christ, could be spoken, maintained and stood to, by the soundest and best established Conscience: and though I will not now speak all that I know in this matter: yet my experience hath more interest in that Text of Scripture, *Gal.* 1. 11, 12. then many amongst men are aware.

268. If any of those who were awakened by my Ministry, did after that fall back (as sometimes too many did) *I* can truly say their loss hath been more to Me, then if one of my own Children, begotten of my body, had been going to its Grave: *I* think verily I may speak it without any offence to the Lord, nothing hath gone so near Me as that, unless it was the fear of the loss of the Salvation of my own soul: *I* have counted as if I had goodly buildings and Lord-ships in those places where my Children were born: my heart hath been so wrapt up in the glory of this excellent work, that I counted my self more blessed and honored of God by this, then if he had made me the Emperor of the Christian World, or the

Lord

Lord of all the glory of the Earth without it: O these words! *He that converteth a sinner from the error of his way, doth save a soul from death*, Jam. 5. 20. *The fruit of the righteous is a tree of Life; and he that winneth Souls, is wise*, Prov. 11. 30. *They that be wise, shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to Righteousness, as the Stars for ever and ever*, Dan. 12. 3. *For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoycing? are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? for, ye are our Glory and joy*, 1 Thes. 2. 19, 20. These, with many others of a like nature, have been great refreshment to me.

269. I have observed, that where I have had a Work to do for God, I have had first as it were the going of God upon my spirit to desire I might preach there: I have also observed, that such and such Souls in particular have been strongly set upon my heart, and I stirred up to wish for their Salvation; And that these very Souls have after this been given in as the fruits of my Ministry. I have also observed, that a Word cast in by the by, hath done more execution in a Sermon, then all that was spoken besides: sometimes also when I have thought I did no good, then I did most of all; and at other times when I thought I should catch them, I have fished for nothing.

270. *I* have also observed this that where there hath been a Work to do upon Sinners, there the Devil hath begun to roar in their hearts,

and by the mouths of his Servants. Yea oftentimes when the wicked World hath raged most, there hath been souls awakened by the Word: I could instance particulars, but I forbear.

271. My great desire in my fulfilling my Ministry, was, to get into the darkest places of the Countrey, even amongst those People that were furthest off of Profession; yet not because I could not endure the Light, (for I feared not to shew my Gospel to any) but because I found my Spirit did lean most after awakening and converting-work, and the Word that I carried, did lean it self most that way; *Yea, so have I strived to preach the Gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another mans foundation*, Rom. 15. 20.

272. In my preaching, I have really been in pain, and have, as it were, travelled to bring forth Children to God, neither could I be satisfied, unless some fruits did appear in my work: If I were fruitless, it mattered not who commended Me; but if I were fruitful, I cared not who did condemn. *I* have thought of that, *Lo, Children are an Heritage of the Lord; and the fruit of the Womb is his reward. As arrows in the hand of a mighty Man; so are Children of the Youth. Happy is the man that hath filled his quiver full of them; they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the Enemies in the Gate*, Psalms 172. 3. 4. 5.

273. It pleased Me nothing to see people drink in Opinions, if they seemed ignorant of Jesus

Jesus Christ, and the worth of their own salvation, found conviction for sin, especially for unbelief, and an heart set on fire to be saved by Christ, with strong breathings after a truly sanctified Soul: That was it that delighted Me; those were the souls I counted blessed.

274. But in this work, as in all other, I had my temptations attending me, and that of diverse kinds; as sometimes I should be assaulted with great discouragement therein, fearing that I should not be able to speak a Word at all to edification; nay, that *I* should not be able to speak sense unto the people; at which times I should have such a strange faintness and strengthlessness seize upon my body, that my legs have scarce been able to carry me to the place of Exercise.

275. Sometimes again, when I have been preaching, I have been violently assaulted with thoughts of blasphemy, and strongly tempted to speak them with my mouth before the Congregation. I have also at some time even when I have begun to speak the Word with much clearness, evidence, and liberty of speech, yet been before the ending of that Opportunity so blinded, and so estranged from the things I have been speaking, and have also been so straitned in my speech, as to utterance before the People, that I have been as if *I* had not known or remembred what *I* have been about, or as if my head had been in a bag all the time of the Exercise.

276. Again, when at sometimes *I* have been

about to preach upon ſome ſmart and ſcorching portion of the word, *I* have found the Tempter ſuggeſt, what! will you preach this? this condemns your ſelf, of this your own ſoul is guilty; wherefore, preach not of it at all; or if you do, yet ſo mince it, as to make way for your own eſcape; leſt inſtead of awakening others, you lay that guilt upon your own ſoul, as you will never get from under.

277. But *I* thank the Lord *I* have been kept from conſenting to theſe ſo horrid ſuggeſtions, and have rather, as *Sampſon*, bowed my ſelf with all my might to condemn ſin and Tranſgreſſion where ever I found it; yea, though therein alſo *I* did bring guilt upon my own Conſcience; *Let me die*, though I, *with the Philiſtines*, Judges 16. 29. 30, rather then deal corruptly with the bleſſed word of God; *Thou that teacheſt another, teacheſt thou not thy ſelf*? it is far better that thou do judge thy ſelf, even by preaching plainly unto others, then that thou, to ſave thy ſelf, impriſon the Truth in unrighteouſneſs: Bleſſed be God for his help alſo in this.

278. I have alſo, while found in this bleſſed work of Chriſt, been often tempted to pride and liftings up of heart; and though *I* dare not ſay, I have not been infected with this, yet truly the Lord of his precious mercy hath ſo carried it towards me, that for the moſt part I have had but ſmal joy to give way to ſuch a thing: for it hath been my every dayes portion

portion to be let into the evil of my own heart, and ſtill made to ſee ſuch a multitude of corruptions and infirmities therein, that it hath cauſed hanging down of the head under all my Gifts and Attainments: I have felt this thorn in the fleſh (2 *Cor.* 12. 8, 9.) the very mercy of God to Me.

279. I have had alſo together with this, ſome notable place or other of the Word preſented before Me, which Word hath contained in it ſome ſharp and piercing ſentence concerning the periſhing of the Soul, notwithſtanding gifts and parts; as for inſtance, that hath been of great uſe unto Me, *Though I ſpeak with the tongue of Men and Angels, and have not charity, I am become as ſounding braſs, and a tinkling Cymbal,* 1 Cor. 13. 1, 2.

280. A tinkling Cymbal, is an Inſtrument of Muſick with which a skilful Player can make ſuch melodious and heart inflaming muſick, that all who hear him play, can ſcarcely hold from dancing; and yet behold, the Cymbal hath not life neither comes the muſick from it, but becauſe of the art of him that playes therewith: ſo then the Inſtrument at laſt may come to naught and periſh, though in times paſt ſuch muſick hath been made upon it.

281. Juſt thus I ſaw it was and will be with them who have Gifts, but want ſaving-Grace: they are in the hand of Chriſt, as the Cymbal in the hand of *David*; and as *David* could with the Cymbal make that mirth in the ſervice of God,

God, as to elevate the hearts of the Worshippers; so Christ can use these gifted men, as with them to affect the Souls of his People in his Church; yet when he hath done all, hang them by, as lifeless, though sounding Cymbals.

282. This consideration therefore, together with some others, were, for the most part, as a Maul on the head of Pride, and desire of vain glory; What, thought I, shall I be proud because I am a sounding brass? Is it so much to be *a Fiddle? Hath not the least Creature that hath* life, more of God in it then these? Besides, *I* knew *'twas Love should never die*, but these must cease and vanish: So *I* concluded a little Grace, a little Love, a little of the true fear of God, is better then all these Gifts: Yea, and I am fully convinced of it, that it is possible for Souls that can scarce give a man an answer, but with great confusion as to Method, I say, it is possible for them to have a thousand times more Grace, and so to be more in the love and favor of the Lord, then some who by vertue of the Gift of Knowledge, can deliver themselves like Angels.

283. Thus therefore I came to perceive that though Gifts in themselves were good, to the thing for which they are designed, to wit, the Edification of others, yet empty and without power to save the soul of him that hath them, if they be alone: Neither are they any signe of a Mans state to be happy.

284. This shewed me too, that Gifts being alone, were dangerous, not in themselves, but because

because of those evils that attend them, to wit, pride, desire of vain glory, self-conceit, &c, all which were easily blown up at he applause and commendation of every unadvised Christian, to the endangering of a poor Creature to fall into the condemnation of the Devil.

285. I saw therefore that he that hath Gifts, had need be let into a sight of the nature of them that they come short of making of him to be in a truly saved condition, lest he rest in them, and so fall short of the grace of God.

286. He hath also cause to walk humbly with God, and be little in his own eyes, and to remember with all, that his Gifts are not his own, but the Churches, and that by them he is made a servant to the Church, and he must also give at last an account of his Steward-ship unto the Lord Jesus, and to give a good account will be a blessed thing.

287. Let all Men therefore prize a little with the fear of the Lord (gifts indeed are desirable) but yet great grace and small gifts are better then great gifts and no grace. It doth not say, the Lord gives gifts and glory, but the Lord gives grace and glory! and blessed is such an one! to whom the Lord gives grace.

A bri[illegible] Account of the Authors Impriſonment.

288. HAving made profeſſion of the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt a long time, and had preached the ſame about five years; I was apprehended at a Meeting of good People in the Countrey, (amongſt whom, had they let Me alone, I ſhould have preached that day, but they took Me away from amongſt them) and had Me before a Juſtice; who, after I had offered ſecurity for my appearing at the next Seſſions, yet committed Me, becauſe my Sureties would not conſent to be bound that I ſhould Preach no more to the people.

289. At the Seſſions after, *I* was indicted for an Upholder and Maintainer of Unlawful Aſſemblies and Conventicles, and for not conforming to the Nationall VVorſhip of the Church of *England*; after ſome conference there with the Juſtices, *was ſentenced to perpetual baniſhment, becauſe I refuſed to Conform.* So being again delivered up to the Goalers hands, I was had home to Priſon, and there have lain now compleat twelve years, waiting to ſee what God will ſuffer theſe men to do with Me.

290. In which condition I have continued with much content thorough Grace, but have met

met with many turnings and goings upon my heart, both from the LORD, Satan, and my own corruptions; by all which (glory be to Jesus Christ) I have also received, among many things, much conviction, instruction, and understanding, of which at large I shall not here discourse; onely, give you in a hint or two, a word that may stir up the Godly to bless God, and to pray for Me; and also to take encouragement, should the case be their own, *Not to fear what man can do unto them.*

291. *I* never had in all my life so great an inlet into the VVord of GOD as now: them Scriptures that *I* saw nothing in before, are made in this place and state to shine upon Me. Jesus Christ also was never more real and apparent than now; here *I* have seen him and felt him indeed: O that word, *We have not preached unto you cunningly devised Fables*, 2 Pet. 1. 16. and that, *God raised Christ from the Dead, and gave him glory, that your Faith and Hope might be in God*, 1 Pet. 1. 20. were blessed words unto Me in this my imprisoned condition.

292. These three or four scriptures also have been great refreshment, in this condition, to to Me; *John* 14. 1, 2, 3, 4. *John* 16. 33 *Col.* 3. 3, 4. *Heb.* 12. 22, 23, 24. So that sometimes, when I have been in the savour of them, *I* have been able to laugh at destruction, *and to fear neither the Horse nor his Rider. I* have had sweet sights of the forgiveness of my sins in this place, and of my being with Jesus in another World: *O*

the

the Mount Sion, the heavenly Jeruſalem, the innumerable company of Angels, and God the Judge of all, and the Spirits of Juſt men made perfect, and Jeſus, have been ſweet unto me in this place: I have ſeen that here, that I am perſwaded I ſhal never while in this World be able to expreſs: I have ſeen a truth in that Scripture, *Whom having not ſeen, ye love, in whom, though now ye ſee him not, yet believing, ye rejoyce with joy unſpeakable, and full of glory.* 1 Pet. 1. 8.

293. I never knew what it was for God to ſtand by Me at all turns, and at every offer of Satan &c, As I have found him ſince I came in hither, for look how fears have preſented themſelves, ſo have ſupports and encouragements; yea, when I have ſtarted, even as it were, at nothing elſe but my ſhadow, yet God, as being very tender of me, hath not ſuffered me to be moleſted, but would with one Scripture or another ſtrengthen me againſt all; in ſo much that I have often ſaid, *Were it lawful, I could pray for greater trouble, for the greater comforts ſake*, Eccl. 7. 14. 2 Cor. 1. 5.

294. Before I came to priſon, I ſaw what was a coming, and had eſpecially two conſiderations warm upon my heart; the firſt was, how to be able to endure, ſhould my impriſonment be long and tedious. The Second was how to be able to encounter Death, ſhould that be here my portion. For the firſt of theſe, that Scripture *Col.* 1. 11. Was great information to me, namely, to pray to God *to be ſtrengthned with all might, according*

according to his glorious Power, unto all patience and long-ſuffering with joyfulneſs: I could ſeldom go to prayer before I was impriſoned, but for not ſo little as a year together, this ſentence or ſweet petition, would, as it were, thruſt it ſelf into my mind, and perſwade me, that if ever I would go thorow long-ſuffering, I muſt have all patience, eſpecially if I would endure it joyfully.

295. As to the ſecond Conſideration, that Saying (*2 Corinthians 1. 9.*) was of great uſe unto me, *But we had the ſentence of death in our ſelves, that we might not truſt in our ſelves but in GOD that raiſeth the dead:* By this Scripture I was made to ſee that if ever I would ſuffer rightly, I muſt firſt paſs a ſentence of death upon everie thing that can properlie be called a thing of this life, even to reckon my ſelf, my Wife, my Children, my health, my enjoyments, and all, as dead to Me, and my ſelf as dead to them.

296. The ſecond was, to live upon God that is inviſible; as *Paul* ſaid in another place, the way not to faint, *is to look not at the things that are ſeen, but at the things that are not ſeen; for the things that are ſeen, are temporal; but the things that are not ſeen, they are eternal*: And thus *I* reaſoned with my ſelf; If I provide only for a priſon, then the Whip comes at unawares, and ſo doth alſo the Pillory; Again, if *I* provide only for theſe, then I am not fit for baniſhment: further, if I conclude that baniſhment is the worſt, then if Death come, I am ſurprized: ſo that I ſee the beſt way to go tho-

row ſufferings, is to truſt in God through Chriſt, as touching the World to come, and as touching this World, *to count the Grave my Houſe, to make my bed in darkneſs, to ſay to Corruption, Thou art my Father, and to the Worms, Thou art my Mother and Siſter*; that is, to familiarize theſe things to Me.

297. But notwithſtanding theſe helps, *I* found my ſelf a Man, and compaſſed with infirmities; the parting with my Wife and poor Children, hath often been to Me in this place, as the pulling the fleſh from my bones; and that not only becauſe I am ſomewhat too too fond of theſe great Mercies, but alſo becauſe I ſhould have often brought to my mind the many hardſhips, miſeries and wants that my poor Family was like to meet with, ſhould I be taken from them, *eſpecially my poor blind Child*, who lay nearer my heart then all *I* had beſides; O the thoughts of the hardſhip *I* thought this might go under, would break my heart to pieces.

298. Poor Child! thought I, what ſorrow art thou like to have for thy portion in this World? Thou muſt be beaten, muſt beg, ſuffer hunger, cold, nakedneſs, and a thouſand calamities, though I cannot now endure the Wind ſhould blow upon thee: But yet recalling my ſelf, thought I, I muſt venture you all with God, though it goeth to the quick to leave you; O, I ſaw in this condition, *I* was as a Man who was pulling down his Houſe upon the head of his wife and children; yet, thought *I*, I muſt do it, I muſt do it: And now *I* thought

of those *two Milch-Kine that were to carry the Ark of God into another Countrey, and to leave their Calves behind them*, 1 Sam. 6. 10. 11, 12.

299. But that which helped me in this temptation, was divers considerations, of which three in special here I will name; the first was, the consideration of those two Scriptures, *Leave thy fatherless Children, I will preserve them alive, and let thy Widows trust in me:* and again, *The Lord said, Verily it shall go well with thy Remnant; verily, I will cause the enemy to entreat thee well in the time of evil*, &c. Jer. 49. 11, Chap. 15. 11.

300. I had also this Consideration, that if I should now venture all for God, I engaged God to take care of my Concernments; But if I forsook him, and his Wayes, for fear of any trouble that should come to Me or mine; then I should not only falsifie my profession, but should count also that my Concernments were not so sure, if left at Gods feet, whilst I stood to and for his name, as they would be if they were under my own tuition, though with the denial of the way of God. This was a smarting consideration, and was as spurs unto my flesh: That Scripture also greatly helped it to fasten the more upon me, where Christ prayes against *Judas*, that God would disappoint him in all his selfish thoughts, which moved him to sell his Master, Pray read it soberly, *Psal.* 109. 6. 7, 8, &c.

301. *I* had also another Consideration, and

that was, the dread of the torments of Hell, which I was ſure they muſt partake of, that for fear of the Croſs, do ſhrink from their profeſſion of Chriſt, his word and Laws, before the ſons of Men: And of the glory that he had prepared for thoſe that in Faith, and Love, and Patience ſtood to his wayes before them. Theſe things, I ſay, have helped Me, when the thoughts of the Miſery that both my ſelf and mine might, for the ſake of my profeſſion, be expoſed to, hath lain pincing on my mind.

302. When I have indeed conceited that I might be baniſhed for my profeſſion, then I have thought of that Scripture, *They were ſtoned, they were ſawn aſunder, were tempted, were ſlain with the Sword; they wandred about in ſheep Skins, and Goat Skins, being deſtitute, afflicted, tormented, of whom the World was not worthy*, for, all they thought they were too bad to dwell and abide amongſt them. *I* have alſo thought of that ſaying, *The Holy Ghoſt witneſſeth in every City, that bonds and afflictions abide me*: *I* have verily thought that my Soul and it, have ſometimes reaſoned about the ſore and ſad eſtate of a baniſhed and exiled condition, how they are expoſed to hunger, to cold, to perils, to nakedneſs, to enemies, and a thouſand calamities; and at laſt it may be to die in a ditch like a poor forlorn and deſolate Sheep. But I thank God hitherto I have not been moved by theſe moſt *delicate* reaſonings, but have rather by them more approved my heart to God.

303. I will tell you of a pretty busines; I was once above all the rest in a very sad and low condition for many weeks, at which time also I being but a young Prisoner, and not acquainted with the Laws, I had this laying much upon my spirit, That my Imprisonment might end at the Gallows for ought that I could tell; now therefore Satan laid hard at Me to bear Me out of heart, by suggesting thus unto Me: But how if when you come indeed to die you should be in this condition; that is, as not to savour the things of God, nor to have any evidence upon your Soul for a better State hereafter? (for indeed at that time all the things of God were hid from my soul.)

304. VVherefore when I at first began to think of this, it was a great Trouble to Me: for I thought with my self, that in the condition I now was in, I was not fit to die, neither indeed did I think *I* could if I should be called to it; Besides, *I* thought with my self, if *I* should make a scrambling shift to clamber up the Ladder, yet *I* should either with quaking, or other symptoms of fainting give occasion to the enemy to reproach the way of God and his people, for their timerousnes; This therefore lay with great trouble upon Me, for Me thought I was shamed to die with a pale Face, and tottering Knees, for such a cause as this.

395. VVherefore I prayed to God that he would comfort Me, and give Me strength to

do and ſuffer what he ſhould call me to: yet no comfort appear'd, but all continued hid: I was alſo at this time ſo really poſſeſſed with the thought of Death, that oft I was as if I was on a Ladder with the Rope about my neck; only this was ſome encouragement to Me, I thought *I* might now have an opportunity to ſpeak my laſt words to a multitude which I thought would come to ſee Me die; and, thought I if it muſt be ſo, if God will but convert one ſoul by my very laſt words, I ſhall not count my life thrown away, nor loſt.

306. But yet all the things of God were kept out of my ſight, and ſtill the Tempter followed me with, *But whether muſt you go when you die? What will become of you? Where will you be found in another World? What evidence have you for heaven and glory, and an inheritance among them that are ſanctified?* Thus was I toſſed for many weeks, and knew not what to do; at laſt this conſideration fell with weight upon Me, *That it was for the word and Way of God that I was in this condition, wherefore I was engaged not to flinch an hairs breadth from it.*

307. *I* thought alſo, that God might choſe whether he would give me comfort now, or at the hour of death; but I might not therefore chuſe whether I would hold my profeſſion or no: I was bound, but he was free, yea, 'twas my duty to ſtand to his word, whether he would ever look upon Me, or ſave me at the laſt: Wherefore, thought I, the point being thus, I

am

am for going on, and venturing my eternal ſtate with Chriſt, whether I have comfort here or no; if God doth not come in, thought I, *I will leap off the Ladder even blind fold into Eternity, ſink or ſwime come Heaven, come Hell; Lord Jeſus, if thou wilt catch me, do; I will venture for thy Name.*

308. I was no ſooner fixed upon this reſolution, but that word dropt upon me, *Doth Job ſerve God for nought?* As if the Accuſer had ſaid, Lord, *Job* is no upright Man, he ſerves thee for by-reſpects; *Haſt thou not made an Hedge about him,* &c. *But put forth now thine hand, and touch all that he hath, and he will curſe thee to thy face.* How now, thought *I*, is this the ſign of an upright Soul, to deſire to ſerve God when all is taken from him; Is he a godly Man that will ſerve God for nothing rather then give out? Bleſſed be God! Then *I* hope I have an upright heart, for I am reſolved (God giving me ſtrength) never to deny my profeſſion, though I have nothing at all for my pains; and as *I* was thus conſidering, that Scripture was ſet before me, *Pſal.* 44. 12, *&c.*

309. Now was my heart full of comfort, for *I* hoped it was ſincere: I would not have been without this tryal for much, *I* am comforted every time *I* think of it, and I hope *I* ſhall bleſs God for ever for the teaching *I* have had by it. Many more of the dealings of God towards me I might relate, *But theſe out of the ſpoils won in Battel have I dedicated to maintain the Houſe of God,* 1 Chron. 26. 27.

THE

THE CONCLUSION.

1. OF all the Temptations that ever I met with in my life, to queſtion the being and truth of the Goſpel, is the worſt, and worſt to be born; when this Temptation comes, it takes away my Girdle from Me, and removeth the Foundation from under me: O I have often thought of that word, *Have your loyns girt about with Truth*; and of that, *When the foundations are deſtroyed, what can the Righteous do?* Sometimes, when after ſin committed, I have looked for ſore chaſtizement from the hand of God, the very next that I have had from

from him hath been the diſcovery of his Grace. Sometimes, when I have been comforted, I have called my ſelf a fool for my ſo ſinking under trouble. And then again when I have been caſt down, I thought I was not wiſe to give ſuch way to comfort. VVith ſuch ſtrength and weight have both theſe been upon Me.

2. I have wondered much at this one thing, that though God doth viſit my ſoul with never ſo bleſſed a diſcovery of himſelf, yet I have found again, that ſuch hours have attended Me afterwards, that I have been in my ſpirit ſo filled with darkneſs, that I could not ſo much as once conceive, what that God and that Comfort was with which I have been refreſhed.

3. I have ſometimes ſeen more in a lin

a line of the Bible, than I could well tell how to ſtand under, and yet at another time the whole Bible hath been to Me as dry as a ſtick; or rather my heart hath been ſo dead and dry unto it, that I could not conceive the leaſt dram of refreſhment, though I have look't it all over.

4. Of all tears, they are beſt that are made by the Blood of Chriſt; and of all joy, that is the ſweeteſt, that is mixt with mourning over Chriſt! Oh 'tis a goodly thing to be on our knees with Chriſt in our arms, before God, I hope I know ſomething of theſe things.

5. I find to this day ſeven abominations in my heart: 1. Inclinings to unbeliet, 2. Suddenly to forget the love and mercy that Chriſt manifeſteth, 3. A leaning to the works of the Law. 4. Wandrings

and

and coldneſs in prayer. 5. To forget to watch for that *I* pray for. 6. Apt to murmur becauſe I have no more, and yet ready to abuſe what I have. 7. I can do none of thoſe things which God commands Me, but my corruptions will thruſt in themſelves; *When I would do good, evil is preſent with Me.*

6. Theſe things I continually ſee and feel, and am afflicted and oppreſſed with; yet the Wiſdom of God doth order them for my good: 1. They make Me abhor my ſelf; 2. They keep me from truſting my heart. 3. They convince me of the inſuffiency of all inherent righteouſneſs. 4. They ſhew me the neceſſity of fleeing to Jeſus. 5. They preſs me to pray unto God. 6. They ſhew me the

need I have to watch and be sober.
And provoke Me to pray unto
God through Christ to help me,
and carry me through
this World
Amen.

FINIS.